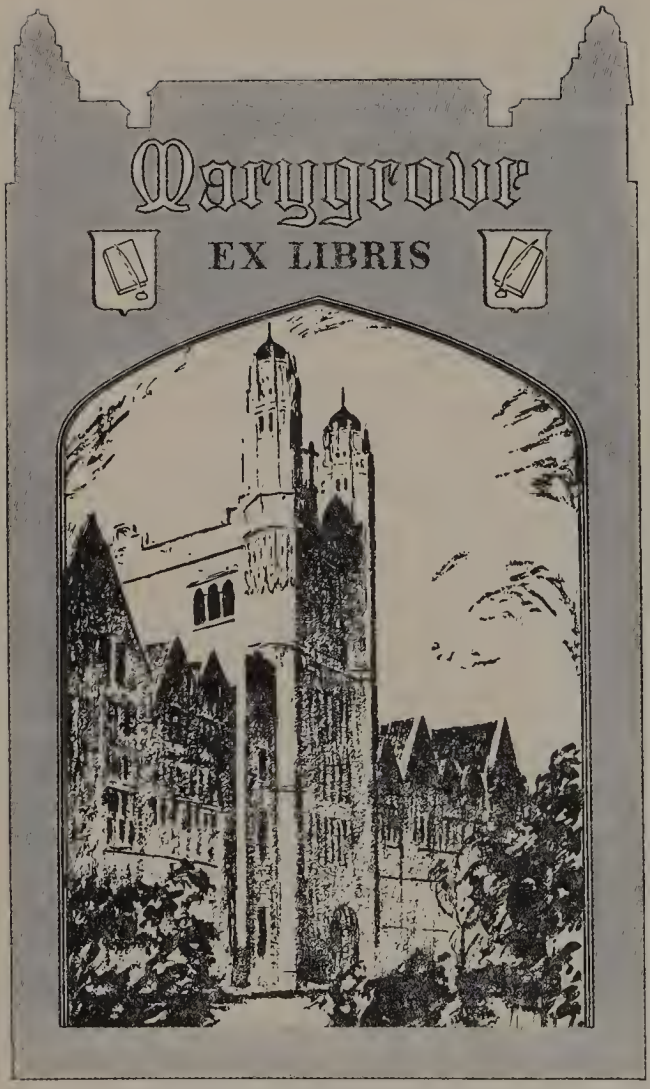
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THE
MIND OF ROME

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THE MIND OF ROME

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PREFACE

THIS book is a companion to R. W. Livingstone's *Pageant of Greece*, and is intended primarily for those who know no Latin, but wish to form some idea of the great Latin writers and what they wrote. Its plan is in the main the same : the various departments of Latin literature have been dealt with separately, and each section is designed to show the historical development of its particular branch. As several writers have contributed to the book there are inevitably certain minor differences in style and treatment, but we have done our best by cross-references and other means to link the whole book together and to make it fundamentally uniform.

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An Italian Hill Town, Capistrello

Photograph by Mr. R. Gardner

INTRODUCTION

If we wish to understand an ancient people—or, indeed, any foreign people—it is necessary besides knowing something of their history, of their habits and of the country in which they lived, to make acquaintance with their mind, to know what were their interests and their mode of thought, their problems and their attitude towards them. Foreign travel can help us to such a knowledge of contemporary nations, but when we are studying an ancient people the one source is their literature. A nation which has passed away, but has left a literature behind it, can be infinitely better known to the modern world than one which has left none, and this is why among the ancient civilized peoples we can form a far truer appreciation of the Greeks, for instance, or the Romans or the Hebrews, than we can of the Egyptians or the Persians or the Babylonians. For we have still extant a great wealth of writings, both in prose and verse, which reveal to us their thought and their imagination.

This book is an attempt to present to English readers some picture of the Mind of Rome. We have advisedly chosen the word 'Mind', because we think it is the most characteristic description of the content of Roman literature. Had we been dealing with Greece, we might perhaps have spoken of its 'Spirit', for though there is indeed more hard thinking in the philosophic writing of Greece than there ever was in Rome, yet Greek literature as a whole has a buoyancy and freshness of imagination which seem always to lift it into the world of spirit. But with the exception of one or two of their poets, Catullus, perhaps, and in a more restrained way Virgil, Rome had little of this quality of spirit. The Romans were always a practical rather than an imaginative people; they thought more of the next step to be taken than of the ultimate ideal. And so in their literature we

seem to see their writers setting themselves deliberately to a problem. Something has to be done and they think out the best way to do it: the result may be a piece of oratory which sweeps us away or a poem instinct with beauty, yet we feel it to have been the outcome of an exercise of mind rather than a spontaneous outburst of the spirit.

There are indeed two special reasons why this was so. In the first place, Roman literature was not a spontaneous native growth. If we attempt to probe far back into the earlier history of the Italian peoples we seem to find traces of rough dramatic performances and, more doubtfully, of the composition and singing of ballads; public business too had clearly produced a kind of rugged oratory. But we can actually date the beginning of the literature of Rome from the time of the Punic Wars, when Rome, having made herself master of Italy, had come into contact with other nations and especially with Greece. We can be more exact than that and can say that it began in the year 240 B.C. when the Greek freedman schoolmaster, Livius Andronicus, translated for his pupils the *Odyssey* and some Greek plays. These became the models for further attempts in drama and epic and then one by one came imitations of other forms of Greek literature. And oddly enough, Roman writers were not only conscious of this dependence on Greek originals, but they gloried in it. A patriotic writer or two attempted to write dramas on Roman subjects, but they were a failure, and when Rome did invent a new form of writing in Satire she did not feel quite comfortable about it and was at pains to show that it was really the legitimate successor of the old Attic Comedy of Aristophanes and his contemporaries. Otherwise, poets were careful to point to their Greek originals: Horace is always telling us that he is introducing Sappho or Alcaeus or Pindar to Rome, Propertius looks to the Alexandrines, Callimachus and Philetas, and even before the publication of the *Aeneid* Virgil's friends proclaimed it as 'something greater than the *Iliad*'. This imitation of Greek models and dependence on Greek originals of itself produces a conscious effort about Latin

literature which gives it essentially an intellectual quality of 'mind'.

The second reason for this intellectual character of Roman literature is closely connected with the first. Not only was it not a product of the people, but it was never really popular; rather it was the possession of the educated few, the few who knew Greek and could therefore appreciate the literature of Rome as an outcome of the Greek. If we look at Roman poetry, we find that the very technical basis of it all, scansion by the quantity of syllables, went against the natural tendency of the Latin language, which was to scan by stress or accent. The earlier dramatists, who wished their works to have a popular vogue, were at pains to secure that stress and quantity should coincide, but in other forms of poetry no such attempt was made and it must always have sounded unnatural to the vulgar. Indeed we have good reason to believe that the people all the while in their own rough songs preserved the old scansion by accent, and when in the late Empire literature declined it burst out again in the popular songs and later in the Christian hymns. Poetry, based on Greek models, was never popular and was the preserve of the cultured minority. And this is true too even of prose. Historians had their Greek models, and orators not only imitated the styles of Greek predecessors, but, as we have but lately learnt in the case of Cicero, even employed formal quantitative rhythms derived from Greek sources. Cicero in his public speeches no doubt meant to persuade the listening mob, but he also meant to win applause from the learned for the correctness and beauty of his cadences.

But if these considerations lead us to ascribe to Roman literature the quality of 'mind' rather than 'spirit', they must not be held to be derogatory to its greatness. For it was never a merely slavish imitation of Greek: from the first it developed its own distinctive Roman qualities, and those the qualities shown in the Roman people themselves in their gradual growth to greatness and the expansion of their empire. Rome had a hard fight to win her way, first with the other peoples of Italy and then

with surrounding nations in an ever-spreading circumference, Greece and Carthage, Gaul, Spain, Germany, Egypt, Asia Minor and Syria. And the qualities which this struggle engendered were mainly two, first manliness (*virtus*), primarily the valour of the soldier and then the virility of the people as a whole, and secondly what we may call 'dignity' (*gravitas*), at first perhaps the quality of the general or statesman, who is not unduly upset by reverses, and then permeating among the people as a sense of their own worth. And with the growing success of the Roman arms came a growing realization of the greatness of Rome, producing a fine patriotism not only in the Romans themselves, but also—and this was really the secret of Rome's success as a conqueror—in the peoples who from time to time became included in the Empire, the 'allies' (*socii*) as the Romans always called them. Now these qualities are always visible in Roman literature, at any rate till the days of decline. Patriotism—not a braggart, self-exalting patriotism, but a just sense of Rome's mission in the world, to spread peace through war—is not only the keynote, as one might expect, of history and oratory and epic, but shows itself too in drama and even in lyric and didactic poetry, where we should less expect it. Virility too and dignity are marked characteristics. Even when Alexandrinism might have spread effeminacy, Rome held out against it, and when, under the Empire, society fell into weak and luxurious ways, literature in the satirists raised its voice in protest. Dignity was inherent in the language; the very changes which Roman poets made in the metres and rhythms of Greece are due to the natural 'weightiness' of Latin, which, though it never degenerated into pomposity, is always the heart of Roman history and oratory.

There are two other characteristics of Roman literature which may rightly be associated with the character of the people. One of these is a certain practical wisdom, which shows itself sometimes as a kind of shrewdness. The Roman was deeply interested in the practical questions of life and conduct: drama, and especially comedy, is full of proverbial maxims for action and

we can sometimes almost hear the applause as they were enunciated on the stage; and when in due course Rome borrowed philosophy from the Greeks it was almost entirely ethics with which she concerned herself. We feel this strain running all through her literature: sometimes it appears as an almost offensive conscious rectitude, more often as a genuine appreciation of real goodness. And in its lighter mood it shows as the shrewdness which made the Roman a good 'business man'. It is to this quality that we must attribute the birth of satire: the moral wisdom produces its reflexion and criticism, and the shrewdness gives it that touch of irony which is its salt. Yet even in satire emerges too the second characteristic, which we may take perhaps to be the product of Rome's success, a geniality and kindliness, which, while it sees faults, is ready to understand and condone them, which has a welcome for the stranger, and a sense, if not of real wit, yet of pervading humour. It was this quality which in Rome's conquests taught her to respect the customs and beliefs of the conquered, it is this quality which gives her literature a kind of good-hearted benevolence that attracts and holds us. It is most noticeable in Plautus, Horace, and Seneca in their different generations, but it shines out elsewhere as well.

It might be thought that the sense of beauty was wholly the gift of Greece to Rome. To some extent this is true. The beauty of sculpture and architecture and painting came to Rome directly or indirectly from Greek sources, but we are learning more and more to see how Rome developed these arts on her own lines.[1] And so it was with the beauty of literature. In the early period of Naevius and Ennius there is, no doubt, but little sense of beauty either in form or in content, but as Rome came to know her Greek models more closely and to think out the full Roman form of them, so imperceptibly came her own peculiar sense of beauty. We may perhaps notice three characteristics. Firstly, on the technical side the sense of form was no doubt to a large extent the

[1] See the article on Art and Architecture by W. G. Rushforth in the *Legacy of Rome*.

result of the Alexandrine movement at the end of the Republican period, but when exaggeration had passed away and Roman poetry had shaped itself more clearly we see in the Augustan poets a new and essentially Roman creation: the rhythms have assumed a weight and compactness which they had not in their lighter Greek shape, couplets and stanzas are more clearly defined and marked off from one another in sense as well as metre, and poems as a whole have assumed a squareness and stability, not unlike that of the typical Roman building. Or, if we look for the sense of beauty in a wider sense, we find a whole new field opened up in the appreciation of the country and country-life: to compare the *Works and Days* of Hesiod with Virgil's *Georgics* is to pass into a quite new atmosphere, where there is delight in the country and its labours and its religion. Nor is this entirely Virgil's own gift to Roman literature, for we find it before him to some degree in Lucretius and later again in the elegiac poets and especially in Tibullus. Another quality which shows itself supremely in Virgil's sense of beauty, but also in other poets and even in prose-writers, is a certain brooding sense of melancholy, which does not detract from the 'sunniness' of the picture, but suggests a sense of the transience and uncertainty of nature and human affairs, and an undefined feeling of destiny. These are essentially Roman notes and they give a characteristic tone to the music of Roman poetry.

This is no attempt at an exhaustive analysis of the qualities of Roman literature, but merely a suggestion of some of the features which a reader may expect to find and which will leave on his mind a distinctive impression. There is another point which it is well too to have in mind. We speak of 'Roman' literature because Rome itself was always the centre, but it must not be imagined that all the poets and prose-writers were Roman-born; indeed it is startling to find how many of them were not. Many were Italians from the north or the south: Ennius came from the little town of Rudiae, Catullus from Verona, Cicero from Arpinum, the historian Livy from Padua, Virgil from Mantua. And as the Roman Empire extended, the provinces too made their contribution; even in the

second century B.C. the comedian Terence was an African slave, in the age of Nero Spain gave Rome the Senecas and Lucan, and later an African, Apuleius, again took up the succession. This is of course the direct outcome of Rome's policy of welding and assimilation after conquest. As the name of the Roman people came to have an ever-widening application, so Roman literature is not the literature of the city only, but of the empire.

The plan of this book is to deal with the literature of Rome in its various departments, showing the gradual development of each and the phases which it went through. In this way it is easiest to obtain a conception of the wide range of the Roman writers and to compare one with another within the limits of the same field. But it has its disadvantages. The same author will appear in more than one department: Cicero, for instance, under Oratory, Philosophy, and Letter-writing; Virgil under Epic, Didactic, and Pastoral; so that, if it is desired to gain a notion of the complete works of a single writer, cross-references must be followed up. Moreover, the different departments run, historically, in vertical columns, and are traced out like so many lines of longitude: if we wish to get an idea of the historical development of Roman literature as a whole, we need to see it also horizontally, as it were, along its lines of latitude. For this purpose it would probably be well to read some short history of Latin literature as an accompaniment to this volume.[1] But as an assistance, it may be well to give here a very brief sketch of the main lines of development.

The history of Roman literature may roughly be divided into four periods: (1) The earlier Republic; (2) The last century of the Republic; (3) The Augustan Age; (4) The Silver Age of the Empire from Augustus to Domitian.

1. The early period dates, as we have seen, from the attempt of *Livius Andronicus* about the middle of the third century B.C. to introduce Greek literature to Rome in translations. But its true characteristic was an attempt to make Latin literature

[1] Dr. J. W. Mackail's *Latin Literature*, or, in a smaller compass, Professor J. Wight Duff's *Writers of Rome*, may be specially recommended.

essentially Roman in tone and really popular. Thus the two outstanding departments in this period are epic and drama. *Naevius* and *Ennius* tried to write Roman epic, telling Roman stories and Roman history in plain straightforward verse without ornament, except alliteration and assonance, so that it might be comprehended of the people. Similarly drama was written to be performed. Tragedy was perhaps never a popular success; the attempt to write tragedies on Roman subjects, made by *Naevius*, *Pacuvius*, and *Accius*, failed because Rome had so few legends except those of Aeneas and Romulus and the facts of her history did not really lend themselves to drama. The tragedies on Greek subjects, written by the same authors and by *Ennius*, though containing much fine work, made no real popular appeal, and, when in later times they were revived, it was mostly for the sake of allusions to contemporary politics which could be squeezed out of them. Comedy had a greater success, and the plays of *Plautus*, derived from Greek originals, yet overlaid with Roman thought and allusions and containing a large element of boisterous fun, undoubtedly had for a time a real following. To this earliest period too we may ascribe the beginnings of prose-literature, the elder *Cato*, the opponent of Greek learning, standing at the head of the list of Roman orators, and also in his great book on *Origins* setting the example of antiquarian research. History too made its beginnings in the writers whom Livy took as his authorities, though it is notable that several of them preferred to write in Greek.

2. The second period—that of the last century of the Republic—may be subdivided into two, (*a*) the period of the Scipionic circle (130–120 B. C.) and (*b*) the great Republican period of the contemporaries of Caesar and Cicero. The characteristic of the first period is the realization that Roman literature can never be really popular and must be written for the educated: this is accompanied, as one might expect, by a growing sense of form based on a renewed study of the best Greek models. The Scipionic circle (i. e. the friends of the younger Scipio) was in fact a small

literary coterie, who devoted themselves to the study of literature and philosophy. Their chief philosopher—*Panaetius*—has left nothing, but profoundly influenced later thought. *Terence*, the African slave, aided, it was said, by Scipio himself, wrote a series of comedies, which, though models of pure Latin diction and marked by subtle study of character, are lacking in the force and dramatic power of Plautus : his work marks the end of drama as a living art in Rome. *Lucilius*, following on Ennius, developed Satire and gave it its sting of criticism and irony, thus starting the tradition which was to be followed by Horace, Persius, and Juvenal and in the modern world by Pope, Dryden, Swift and Dr. Johnson. Meanwhile the stirring political events of the time had given a spur to Oratory, and *Caius Gracchus*, although we have but little of him left, was a model whom Cicero greatly admired, and later *Crassus* and *Antonius*, Cicero's teachers, further developed the art. (*b*) There is a lull during the Civil Wars of Marius and Sulla, marked however by the introduction of the 'occasional' elegiac poem by *Q. Valerius Catulus* and others. Then from 70 B.C. onwards comes the great epoch of literary activity, which has always disputed for supremacy with the succeeding age of Augustus. In poetry Alexandrinism in an exaggerated form vitiated many of the lesser writers, but two great poets stand out, *Catullus* with a freshness and vigour of feeling which remains without parallel in Latin, and *Lucretius*, whose deep earnestness and vivid imagination enabled him to accomplish the almost impossible task of setting out a system of philosophy in poetry of the highest quality. In prose, history is represented by the Commentaries of *Caesar*—a model of clear style and narrative—and by the rather more affected work of *Sallust*, who writes in a conscious style with an intentional political bias. To these may be added the less important biographies written by *Cornelius Nepos*. In oratory we have the great names of *Hortensius*, whose speeches unfortunately do not survive, and of *Cicero*, who set the style for oratory which has influenced all subsequent ages in Europe. Cicero has left us the first extant attempt at the writing

of philosophy and literary criticism in Latin, and an invaluable collection of genuine and spontaneous letters. Hardly less important, though but little survives, were the antiquarian and scientific researches of *Marcus Terentius Varro* who also developed the Menippean satire, a medley of prose and verse. It is altogether an amazing period and its influence on the literature of the world has been immense.

3. The Augustan age, though continuous in time with the Republican period, is markedly different in character. A long period of civil dissension had been followed by a time of peace, or at least of pacification: the independence of the Republic was succeeded by the rule of one man, and politics ceased to have a burning interest. Augustus was himself genuinely interested in literature and believed that the poets could help him in making a new start. Consequently with the help of his supporter, Maecenas, he gathered round him a brilliant circle of court-poets, all in a greater or less degree subservient to him, but free enough to express in their writings their own characters and outlook on life. Of these the greatest is of course *Virgil*: his three main works, the *Eclogues*, pastoral poems in the manner of Theocritus, the *Georgics*, a poem on agriculture in which he has embodied his love of the country and country-life, and the *Aeneid*, the epic in which he has summed up the greatness of Rome, will always stand out as the high-water mark of Latin poetry. *Horace*, a less deep personality, showed his versatility in *Satires* and *Epistles*, in which he discourses genially on moral and social topics, and in the *Odes* and *Epodes*, in which he gave its own peculiar form to the Latin lyric. Belonging to the same circle are *Propertius*, the writer of amorous elegiac, more under the influence of Alexandria, and another elegiac poet, *Tibullus*, whose verse is also amatory in character, but is marked by a love of country life second only to Virgil's. More detached from the court circle, and indeed in opposition to it after his exile by Augustus, is *Ovid*, the most voluminous of Roman poets, who ranged from the semi-ironic mythology of the *Metamorphoses* through the anti-

quarianism of the *Fasti* to the wearisome lamentations of the poems of his exile: a prolific genius, who disputes with Herodotus the claim to be the greatest story-teller of antiquity. Well below these poets comes the rather tedious astronomer *Manilius*, who carried on the tradition of didactic poetry.

The Augustan age was essentially an age of poets. With the decline of politics, oratory fell into decay, and history is represented only by the one outstanding figure of *Livy*. His colossal undertaking of writing the history of Rome down to his own times is unique, and, even though we may never recover it all, enough remains for us to realize his great qualities. The history is in reality a vast panegyric of Rome, but his patriotism has always restraint and moderation. In a different field we have in the Augustan age the architectural and engineering treatise of *Vitruvius*.

4. The Silver Age (contrasted with the 'Golden Age' which includes periods 2 and 3) was a long period of gradual decline on the whole, but with occasional outbursts of vigour, lasting for about 100 years from the death of Augustus in A.D. 14 till the reign of Hadrian. Public life under the emperors was becoming more and more of a formality and, with the ever-increasing prosperity and luxury of the capital, vitality was passing from Rome to the provinces. A fatal influence too was exercised by the formal training in rhetoric, which was undergone by all young men of the educated classes and which tended to substitute cleverness and epigram for naturalness and genuine feeling. In this period again we may distinguish two lines of special activity, the first under the emperor Nero (54–69 A. D.), and the second under the emperors of the end of the century, Vespasian, Titus, Domitian and Hadrian.

To the first period, though he is in fact a little before it, belongs *Phaedrus* who wrote fables in verse after the manner of Aesop, but with a touch of irony, which has sometimes caused him to be put in the succession of the satirists. A more genuine satiric poet is the young *Persius*, who set out his Stoic musings in crabbed and

unattractive verse. In this period too prose satire comes once more to the fore: *Petronius*, half-satirist, half-novelist, writing in prose with an occasional interruption of verse, carries on the tradition set by Varro, while *Seneca*, in his brief lampoon on the death of the emperor Claudius known as the *Pumpkinification*, writes bitterly, but without much humour. *Lucan*, a young Spaniard, essays historical epic once more in the *Pharsalia*, an account of the wars of Pompey and Caesar, much vitiated by rhetoric, but also profoundly influenced by Virgil. The principal prose writer of this period is undoubtedly *Seneca*, a Spanish kinsman of Lucan and tutor of the emperor Nero, who besides touching on science in his *Natural Questions* wrote a large number of treatises and a vast series of moral *Letters*, setting out in a genial and very unmethodical manner the watered-down Stoicism which was then in vogue. We may add the names of *Pomponius Mela*, the geographer, and *Celsus*, the writer on medicine, both of whom belong to this generation.

In the later imperial period we have a more prolific output, but, with one or two exceptions, it is not high in quality. The second-rate poets showed a tendency to return to epic: *Valerius Flaccus* wrote a rather turgid poem on the Argonauts, not however devoid of feeling and power, *Statius* a tedious narrative called the *Thebais*, which at times shows a real gift of description, and *Silius Italicus*, coming back again to the historical epic, an immense work on the Punic wars, of which the less said the better. Statius also wrote a book of *Silvae*, occasional poems, which, but for two or three attractive pieces, have all the worst faults both of Alexandrinism and of adulation. Far more important was the satire of *Juvenal*, who, even though his sincerity has sometimes been doubted, has a master-hand and has exercised a lasting influence. With him may be grouped *Martial*, whose epigrams on a variety of subjects often have a satiric sting. In prose the record is more noteworthy: *Quintilian* in his long work on the *Training of an Orator* has not only given us an interesting discussion of the prevailing education, but much literary criticism,

very characteristic of the Roman mind. *Pliny the Elder* in his vast work on *Natural History* collected with immense pains the rather desultory scientific knowledge of his day, his nephew *Pliny the Younger* wrote a series of polished letters, manifestly intended for publication, but showing a kindly and cultured character. But by far the greatest name of the period is that of *Tacitus*, who besides an interesting *Dialogue on Orators*, an early work in the Ciceronian manner, and two gems of condensation, a monograph on *Germany*, and a biography of his father-in-law, *Agricola*, conceived and in large part executed the vast task of a history of the empire from Augustus to his own day. He used the rhetorical manner of his day not to corrupt an existing style, but to develop an entirely novel style of history, terse, mordant, epigrammatic, sometimes almost ' telegraphic ', which in his hands is magnificently successful, but has been the despair of all imitators and translators.

Latin literature lingered on, gradually declining, but with an occasional flicker such as the miscellaneous writings of *Apuleius* (*c.* A. D. 160), till it was merged in the Middle Ages. But the student who has followed it up to Tacitus will have made the acquaintance of all that is worth knowing.

PART I

VERSE

EPIC

In epic poetry Rome gives us much of her best, and also some of her worst. More persistent throughout Rome's literary history than any other form of poetry, epic rises gradually to a great climax—for the *Aeneid* must always remain one of the greatest poems of the world—and then sinks away, corrupted by the characteristic faults of the imperial decadence. Roman epic till the last stage of its decline is always typically Roman: though like other branches of Latin literature it was founded on Greek models, it early developed the strong tone of patriotism which marked it in its greatness and also to some degree in its decay. If we are to look anywhere for the 'mind of Rome' it must be in Virgil. In the modern world, too, Roman epic has produced great offspring, for without the *Aeneid* neither Dante's *Divine Comedy* nor Milton's *Paradise Lost*, divergent as they are from one another, could have come into being.

Narrative poetry in some form or other seems a natural and almost inevitable outgrowth in any nation, and there is reason to believe that some kind of ballad singing may have been developed in Rome unaided by external influences. Cato the elder, according to Cicero, knew of songs of the deeds of heroes which were sung at banquets. Niebuhr, the historian, built on this a theory of the existence of a considerable ballad literature in early Rome to which, he believed, were due the stories of the hero kings which we find as the legendary prelude to Roman history: it was the spirit of these supposed ballads which Macaulay tried to reproduce in the 'Lays of Ancient Rome'. Their belief may have been exaggerated, but it is clear that when Rome grasped the idea of epic on a larger scale she was quick to seize it: there was at least a predisposition to celebrate the deeds of heroes in poetry.

Greece had as the background of her poetry the great epics of Homer, which throughout her history never lost their charm and their power: they remained always the monumental achievement on which the Greek boy was educated and to which he turned almost as to his Bible. And so when in 240 B. C. the Greek freedman Livius Andronicus, more schoolmaster than poet, wished to introduce Roman boys to the joys of Greek literature 'in translations', he turned naturally to the *Odyssey*. He did not attempt to introduce into Latin the Homeric hexameter, but

used instead the rough Italian ' Saturnian ' metre, scanned in all probability not by quantity but by accent, and producing an effect something like that of our nursery rhyme, ' The queen was in the parlour, eating bread and honey '. There are only scattered lines of his effort remaining, and a rather pale reflex of the *Odyssey* they appear ; but they represent the very beginnings of Latin literature, the first steps on the road which was to lead to Virgil's *Aeneid*.

It was not long before the hint was taken. CNAEUS NAEVIUS (*c.* 270–199 B.C.[1]) was determined to make a Latin literature which should be independent of Greek. He wrote plays on Roman subjects and also set out to compose an epic account of the ' Punic War ', in which he himself had served. His choice of theme was characteristic, and so is the plodding methodical manner in which he set about it. About one hundred lines of the poem are left to us, and they are enough to enable us to form some judgement on his style. We may try to give something of the effect of his lines in the rough nursery metre. Sometimes his verse is the baldest narrative, thus :

> Marcus Valerius, the consul, marches out to forage
> With more than half his army.

Or again,

> The army of the Romans
> Crosses o'er to Malta, ravages the island,
> Burns and lays waste everything, settles the foemen's
> business.

Note the almost slangy phrase with which this ends, hardly worth the dignity of epic. But prefixed to this matter-of-fact account of the war is a story, precious to us because here for the first time in Latin literature we meet the Aeneas legend. Here is a glimpse of the flight from Troy :

> Aeneas' wife and mother
> Fled the town at midnight with veils around their heads,
> Weeping both at going, shedding tears of sorrow.

Later on we have a fragment which may, as some think, refer to the meeting with Dido :

> Wise and kindly questions, asking how Aeneas
> Quitted burning Troy.

[1] See pp. 171 ff.

Here are incidents used by Virgil, and commentators tell us that he imitated even Naevius' words. It is interesting, too, to see that Naevius employed the Greek epic machinery of the gods in heaven. Here is Venus beginning an expostulation at the sufferings of the Trojans at sea :

> Venus accosts her father, Jove the best and highest:
> ' King supreme of heaven, why didst thou beget me ? '

These little scraps are tantalizing, but of great interest when we bear in mind later developments.

The first epic poet of whom we have any substantial remains is Quintus Ennius (239–169 B. C.). He is an outstanding figure in many departments of Roman literature (see pp. 130, 174 ff., 282) and seems to have made it his purpose to show something of the Greek regard for form combined with the true Roman spirit. And so when he came to write the *Annales*, the history of Rome down to his own time, in the form of a great epic, he no longer used the native ' Saturnian ' metre, but introduced the hexameter,[1] scanned, as in Greek, by quantity. The experiment was a difficult one and the result often tentative and harsh, but it is more than a beginning, for in the 600 lines which still remain of the eighteen books the poet not only sounds a strong note of patriotism—Ennius too was a soldier—but displays a growing sense of the dignity of Rome and of the greatness of her destiny.

Like Naevius, Ennius started with legend. He first tells the story of Aeneas and then at greater length the wholly Roman legend of Romulus. Here is a considerable fragment in which Aeneas' daughter, Ilia, now a Vestal Virgin, tells her elder sister of a prophetic dream :

> WHEN roused the trembling dame had brought her torch,
> In tears spake Ilia, stricken by her dream :
> ' Daughter of that Euridice, whom once
> Our father loved, my strength, my life is gone.
> The vision of a glorious man I saw
> Transport me through the lovely osier-beds
> Along the banks and into unknown ways.
> And then alone, it seemed, I wandered far

[1] The hexameter is not a metre which suits English, and there is a fairly general consensus of opinion that it is best represented in English by the freedom of blank verse.

Searching for thee, dear sister, and thy steps;
Nor could I grasp thee in my dream; no path
Gave surety to my feet. Then suddenly
Our father seemed to call me with a cry:
"Daughter, thou must bear pains, yet afterwards
From out the river shall thy fortune turn."
So spake our father, sister, and was gone
Nor gave himself more to my longing sight,
Though oft I stretched my hands to heaven's blue dome,
Weeping and calling him with yearning voice.
So scarce the dream did leave my fever'd heart.'

This is a great advance on Naevius and shows some quality of real poetic narrative: at the same time it has its roughnesses, not easily reproduced in translation, in the use of prosaic and awkward words and a rather naive alliteration. In a short passage describing the lamentation of Romulus' followers at his death there is deep feeling:

STRONG hearts are seized with sorrow, 'Romulus,
O Romulus divine,' mourns one to other,
'Strong guardian to our land Heaven gat in thee.
O sire, o father, offspring of the gods,
Thou ledd'st us forth into the coasts of light.'

As the poet left legend and approached his own times, his treatment of events naturally grew more detailed and more matter-of-fact. He dealt at some length with Rome's war with Pyrrhus, King of Epirus (281–275 B.C.), and Cicero has quoted with admiration the chivalrous reply which Ennius represents the Greek king as giving to a proposal by the Roman general to ransom prisoners:

I ASK not gold, ye shall not pay me price.
Not huckstering war, but waging war like men,
With steel not gold, we'll both decide our fate.
Whether Dame Fortune will that I prevail
Or you, or whate'er else her judgement be,
By valour make we trial. Mark me well:

Those men whose valour by the battle's fortune
Was spared, their freedom shall by me be spared.
'Tis my resolve; take them: I give them freely;
And may the great gods grant thereto their grace.

Ennius then described the Punic wars, traversing the same ground as Naevius, but giving his theme, we may be sure, a greater poetic value. We may quote from the account of the Second Punic War (218–201 B. C.) a famous description of the confidential friend of the general Servilius Geminus; it is said to be a portrait of the poet himself in his relations with Marcus Fulvius Nobilior, who subdued Aetolia in 189 B. C.

HE called his friend, with whom he loved to share
Table and talk and all affairs, at ease,
Worn out by some long day in council spent
And grave debate on high affairs of state
In market-place or sacred senate-house.
Him he could frankly tell things great and small,
And jest and pour out words of good or ill
Just as he would, sure of his trust in one
Wise to conceal or tell the words he heard.
Many their joys alone, or with the crowd;
No thoughts could make him fickle or malicious,
Or warp his mind to crime; learned and loyal,
Gentle and eloquent, content and happy,
Shrewd, seasonable in word, apt, reticent,
With many a buried treasure of the past,
Laws of old ancestors, of gods and men,
Which taught him to keep customs new and old.

It is possible perhaps from these extracts to realize the dignity and depth which caused Ennius to be regarded as the 'father of Roman poetry', and at more than one period later on made men turn back from the artificialities of their contemporaries to his simpler and weightier lines. His very ruggedness was Roman and appealed to their national consciousness: he was indeed, as Ovid described him, 'Great in his Genius, in his Art uncouth.'

After Ennius there is a long gap in the history of Roman epic.

It does not seem to have appealed to the strict Hellenism of the circle of literary men which gathered round the younger Scipio (*c.* 130 B.C.), and in the last century of the Republic Roman poets were largely under the domination of Alexandrinism, which preferred the short gem-like type of poem to the long-sustained effort; 'a big book is a big bore,' said one of Alexandria's leading critics. Yet, when epic appears again, it is clear that Alexandrinism had left its mark on it, and we cannot therefore exclude from the history of epic the typically Alexandrine poem of 408 lines which was written by CATULLUS (see pp. 62 ff., 130 ff.) on the Marriage of Peleus and Thetis. It has all the marks of its kind, artificiality, preciousness, obtruded mythological learning, and yet with it a really Greek sense of form and beauty, which was the lasting gift of Alexandrinism. We may quote a passage from the translation of Sir William Marris. On the coverlet of the marriage bed is embroidered the scene of Ariadne's desertion by Theseus, whom she had aided against the Minotaur, a monster kept by her father in the Labyrinth:

WHY leave the earlier subject of my verse,
Further to tell how from her sire she passed
And clinging sister, and her mother last,
Who o'er her daughter wildly laughed and mourned,
And from them all to her dear Theseus turned?
How sped the boat to Dia's foamy shores,
And how, as sunk in slumber soft she lay,
Faithless he left her there and stole away?
Often, they say, she passionately sent
Forth from her very heart a piercing shriek;
Then would she sadly climb the broken peak
To range her gaze over the vast extent
Of waves, and then would bare her to the knee,
And run to meet the ripples of the sea,
And thus poured out her final sad lament
While 'mid her tears the cold sobs came and went:
'What! hast thou borne me from my father's house
And left me thus forlorn beside the seas?
False Theseus, O how false! to leave me thus,

And all unmindful of the gods' decrees
To carry home a load of perjuries?
Could nothing stay thy cruel purpose? was
No mercy in thee, which might make thee feel
Some pity for me in that heart of steel?
Not these the pledges, which in whispers soft
Thou gavest me; not this thou bad'st me wait,
But happy marriage, nuptials beloved,
All which the winds have blown away in vain.
Now let no woman trust the troth of men
Nor deem a lover's speeches faithful now!
For while they want and seek a thing with greed
Nothing there is they will not swear or vow;
But, when their hot desire is satiate,
No words they fear, no broken oaths they heed.

(*Catullus*, lxiv. 117–149, tr. Marris.)

In the next age, that of Augustus, Roman epic reaches its climax. PUBLIUS VERGILIUS MARO (70–19 B.C.) was the son of a Mantuan merchant turned farmer. He was brought up as a child amid country sights and sounds, and afterwards educated at Milan and in the school of the Epicurean philosopher Siro at Naples. He had been drawn into the literary court-circle of the young emperor and his 'home-secretary' Maecenas. His earlier works, the *Eclogues* (p. 212 ff.) and the *Georgics* (p. 112 ff.), were the outcome of his own early life, of country sights and sounds, but blended with a growing sense of the greatness of Rome's destiny and of the start of a new era of peace after the nightmare of the civil wars. The *Aeneid*, undertaken possibly at Augustus' request, was to be the great epic of Rome, summing up all her past achievements in war and citizenship and literature, enshrining the beauty of Italy and of the old Italian religion and customs, and prophetic of a greater and higher destiny to come. Though the poet died before he had fully revised his poem and is said to have wished it to be destroyed, yet it remains in its unfinished state unique. But even if it stands alone, it is the direct successor of what had gone before. Virgil rightly saw that for the true epic the theme must be legendary and not historical, and he chose the story of Aeneas, which had already been handled both by

The Bay of Naples from the legendary site of Virgil's Tomb

Photograph by Mr. W. A. Casson

Naevius and by Ennius : and into this legendary theme he wove a patriotism wider and more far-sighted than they had expressed in their historic subjects. There is in the *Aeneid* all the gravity and dignity of the old Roman epics, and yet there is, too, the art of Alexandria, refined and pruned of its extravagances, but contributing a delicate sense of form and beauty such as the rugged writers of a century before had not even conceived. The *Aeneid* is thus essentially a ' literary ' epic, full of allusion to old events, old thoughts, old phrases, demanding for its full appreciation something of the learning of the scholar. There is not in it the simple freshness of the tales of war and adventure which we find in Homer : the story sometimes drags, the characters, especially that of Aeneas himself, seem heavily drawn, and antiquarianism is now and then felt as a weight. But there is always a wonderful felicity of phrase, a great dramatic power and a strength of imagination tempered by a deeply religious, if somewhat sad, philosophy of life. In the *Aeneid* we still find the character and thought of the educated Roman at their best.

It is not easy to give the effect of the *Aeneid* in extracts : the poem must be read as a whole. But something of its quality may perhaps be realized if we try to tell the story in brief outline, quoting largely and piecing together the quotations with narrative. It will be well, too, to choose extracts from several different modern translators : no one of them can really reproduce Virgil's stately hexameters or the grace and finish of his language, but different aspects of his work and different touches will be brought out by one or another.

The poem opens with the description of a storm sent by Aeolus, the wind-god, at the request of Juno—the goddess who favoured the Greeks during the Trojan war—upon the fleet on which Aeneas and his followers have escaped from Troy after the sack :

SO saying, full at the hollow rock he drove
His spear uplifted. Through the cleft straightway
Forth trooping rush the winds in wedged array,
And whirling scour the earth. The rough waves leap
In thunder. Tossing clouds of eddying spray,
South, East, and gusty West in chorus sweep
Huge billows to the shore, and plough the upturned deep
Down to the lowest bottom. Shouts and cries,

Crackling of cordage, groaning masts resound;
Clouds snatch the daylight from the Trojan's eyes.
Black Night sits brooding on the waves. All round
Leaps the live thunder with delirious bound,
And frequent flashes light the lurid air.
All nature, big with instant ruin, frowned
Destruction. Then Aeneas' limbs in fear
Were loosened, and he groaned, and stretched his hands in prayer.
'Thrice, four times blest, who, in their father's face,
Fell by the walls of Ilion far away!
O son of Tydeus, bravest of thy race,
Why could not I have perished on that day
Beneath thine arm, and poured this soul away,
Far on the plains of Troy, where Hector brave
Lay, pierced by fierce Aeacides; where lay
Giant Sarpedon, and swift Simois' wave
Rolls heroes, helms, and shields, blent in one watery grave?'
(*Aen.* i. 81–100, tr. Fairfax Taylor.)

The storm drives the Trojans to the African coast, where Dido, fleeing from Tyre, has recently founded Carthage. The queen receives them kindly and Aeneas tells the tale of Troy's capture and his wanderings. We are reminded of Naevius.

'IT was the time when the first slumber falls
On suffering mortals, by the high gods' gift
Then sweetliest stealing o'er them: lo! in sleep
Hector before mine eyes, all woe-begone,
Seemed then to stand, and shower down floods of tears;
Torn by the dragging chariot, as of old,
And black with blood-stained dust,—his swollen feet
Pierced with the thong. Ah! what a sight he was!
How all unlike that Hector, who returned,
Clad in Achilles' arms,[1] the spoils of war,
Or fresh from hurling on the Danaan decks
The fires of Phrygia! now with draggled beard,

[1] Taken from Patroclus, to whom Achilles had lent them.

And hair blood-clotted, wearing all those wounds
So thickly dealt him round his native walls!
Weeping myself I first, methought, addressed
The hero, and drew forth these sorrowing words:
"Light of the Dardan land, O staunchest hope
Of Teucria's sons, say why this long delay?
Or from what borders, Hector, art thou come,
Much looked for? is it thus that, wearied out
With all the myriad slaughters of thy friends,
City and townsmen's ever-changing woes,
Our eyes behold thee? What unseemly cause
Hath marred thy cloudless features? or what mean
These wounds I gaze on?" Not a word spake he,
Nor recked mine idle questioning, but groan
On laboured groan from out his bosom's depth
Upheaving, "Ah! fly, goddess-born," he said,
"And snatch thee from the flames: the foeman hath
Our walls, and Troy from her proud summit sinks.
Enough to king and country hath been given:
If any hand could Pergamus have saved,
Then mine had saved it: Troy commits to thee
Her worship and her household gods; these take
As comrades of thy destinies; for these
Seek out a mighty city thou at length
Shalt rear thee, having roamed wide ocean o'er."
Such words he spake, and in his hands bare forth
The sacred fillets from the inmost shrine,
And Vesta's might, and her undying fire.
'Meantime the walls grow one confusèd scene
Of widespread anguish; and, though far withdrawn
My sire Anchises' palace amid trees
Lay sheltered, ever louder and more loud
Surges the din, swells out the alarm of war.
I start from sleep, to the high roof-top mount,
And stand, all ear, to hearken: as, when fire

Falls on the corn beneath the furious south,
Or ravening torrent from a mountain flood
Lays low the fields, lays low the laughing crops,
The oxen's labour, and drags forests down
Headlong, the hind from some tall craggy peak
Mute with amaze stands listening to the roar.
Then is the bare truth self-attested, then
The Danaan wiles unmask them; see e'en now
The house of Deiphobus a vast ruin yawns
O'ertopped by Vulcan! see his neighbour too
Ucalegon in flames! Sigeum's gulf
Reflects the blaze afar. Up goes to heaven
Shouting of men, and clarion's bray; distraught
I seize mine arms, though arms lack argument;
But my heart burns to mass a warrior-band,
And with my comrades hasten to the hold:
Frenzy and anger urge my headlong will,
And death methinks how comely, sword in hand!
'But Panthus, from the Achaean darts escaped,
Panthus, the son of Othrys, see! and priest
Of Phoebus on the height, in his own hand
The sacred emblems of the vanquished gods,
And dragging his young grandchild after him,
Nigh at wits' end comes hurrying to my door.
"Panthus, how stands the fortune of the day?
What point of vantage seize we?" Scarce had I
Uttered the words when, groaning, he replies:
"The latest day, the inevitable hour,
Has dawned on Dardan land; we, Trojans once,
And Ilium, and the Teucrians' giant fame
Have been, and are not; Jove's remorseless will
From us to Argos hath borne all away;
Our town 's a-flame; the Danaans lord it there.
Towering amidst the city-walls erect
The horse rains armèd warriors! far and near

Sinon[1] with victor-insolence spreads wide
The conflagration. Through the folding gates
Some enter, myriads countless as e'er came
From great Mycenae; some, to bar our path,
With weapons have beset the narrow ways,
A wall of steel-blade edges flashing bare,
For death-blow dight: scarce seek the foremost guards
To hold the gates against them, or maintain
The blindfold conflict." At such words as these
From Othrys' son, and at the doom of heaven,
I rush into the midst of fire and fray,
Where the grim Fury, where the battle-din
Me summons, and the shouts uptossed to heaven.'

(*Aen.* ii. 268–338, tr. Rhoades.)

This Second Book is full of a sense of mystery and impending doom, and one of the most eerie passages is that in which Aeneas sees Helen, 'common fiend of Troy and her own country'—and thinking to slay her is withheld by the appearance of Venus, his goddess mother:

'SUDDEN to my sight is borne,
Never till now so dazzling to behold,
And in pure radiance beaming through the night,
My gentle mother—goddess undisguised—
Such and so stately as her form appears
To sons of heaven: she held me by the hand,
And thus, moreover, spake with rosy lips:
"Son, what fierce anguish in thy bosom stirs
Ungovernable wrath? why ragest thou?
Thy care for me fled whither? Wilt thou not
See first where thou hast left thine age-worn sire,
Anchises, whether still survive thy wife
Creüsa and Ascanius thy child?
Whom all ere this, encompassed every side

[1] By pretending to be a deserter he had persuaded the Trojans to drag the wooden horse into the city.

By prowling Greeks, did not my care prevent,
Or flames had snatched, or foeman's sword devoured.
Think not it is the hated face of her,
The Spartan daughter of Tyndareos,
No, nor much blamèd Paris, but the gods,
The gods, whose unrelenting hate o'erturns
This empire, and Troy's loftiness brings low.
Look—for the cloud which, o'er thy vision drawn,
Dulls mortal sight, and spreads a misty murk,
I will snatch from thee utterly: but thou
Fear not thy mother's bidding, nor refuse
Her hests to hearken—here where thou but seest
Huge shattered fragments and stone rent from stone,
And dust and smoke blent in one surging sea,
Neptune with his vast trident shakes the walls,
And heaves the deep foundations, from her bed
O'ertoppling all the city. Juno here
Storms at the entrance of the Scaean gate,
Implacable, and raging, sword on thigh,
Summons her armed confederates from the ships.
Now backward glance, and on the embattled height
Already see Tritonian Pallas throned,
Flashing with storm-cloud and with Gorgon fell.
The Sire himself each Danaan heart imbues
With courage and victorious might; himself
Against our Dardan power stirs up the gods.
Son, snatch at flight, and let thine efforts end.
Nowhere will I forsake thee till set safe
Upon thy father's threshold." She had said,
And vanished in thick shadows of the night.
Dread forms appear, and mighty potentates
Of heaven, at feud with Troy.
'Ah! then mine eyes
Beheld all Ilium settling into flame,
Troy, Neptune's city, from her base o'erthrown;
As some hoar ash-tree on the mountain-tops,

Which eager husbandmen make haste to fell,
With steel and showering axe-strokes hacked and hewn,
Threatens and ever threatens, and nods on
With quaking foliage, rocking crest, until,
Little by little, 'neath the wounds o'erpowered,
One dying groan it utters, and falls stretched
Along the hillside, a root-severed wreck.
I get me down, and with the god to guide
Through fire and foes win unimpeded way;
Weapons give place to me, and flames retire.'

(*Aen.* ii. 589–633, tr. Rhoades.)

Towards the end of the book the spectre of his lost wife Creüsa tells how he must come to a western land, where high destinies await him—the first vague indication of the hero's future. He sets sail and after long wanderings reaches Aetna:

LOCKED from the wind the haven is, itself an ample bay;
But hard at hand mid ruin and fear doth Aetna thunder loud;
And whiles it blasteth forth on air a black and dreadful cloud,
That rolleth on a pitchy wreath, where bright the ashes mix,
And heaveth up great globes of flame and heaven's high star-world licks,
And other whiles the very cliffs, and riven mountain-maw
It belches forth; the molten stones together will it draw
Aloft with moan, and boileth o'er from lowest inner vale.
This world of mountain presseth down, as told it is in tale,
Enceladus the thunder-scorched; huge Aetna on him cast,
From all her bursten furnaces breathes out his fiery blast;
And whensoe'er his weary side he shifteth, all the shore
Trinacrian trembleth murmuring, and heaven is smoke-clad o'er.
In thicket close we wear the night amidst these marvels dread,
Nor may we see what thing it is that all that noise hath shed:
For neither showed the planet fires, nor was the heaven bright
With starry zenith; mirky cloud hung over all the night,
In mist of dead untimely tide the moon was hidden close.

(*Aen.* iii. 570–87, tr. William Morris.)

Here he encounters the Cyclops, Polyphemus. One of Ulysses' men left behind by his fleeing comrades has warned the Trojans of the monster's presence—an obvious link with the *Odyssey*:

SCARCE had he spoken, when lo! we behold on the mountain's shelf,
There with his cattle around him, the moving giant himself,
Shepherd fell, Polyphemus, in quest of his haunts in the bight;
Portent appalling, shapeless, immense, all blind to the light.
Lopped by his hands, one trunk of a pine to his feet is a stay;
Wool-fleeced sheep his companions; his single happiness they,
Only relief in his anguish.
When he has reached to the deep sea billows, and come to the waves,
Oozing gore therein from his eyeless socket he laves,
Grinding his teeth with groans; at his height then stalks through the seas,
Now at the deepest, nor even are his tall flanks wetted by these.
We in confusion fly, our suppliant stranger on board
Take, as he merits, and sunder in silence cable and cord;
Forward bend, cleave bravely the billows, bury the blade.
Quick to perceive our sound, for the plashing water he made.
But when he powerless found him to place right hand on the prey,
Failing to rival in speed the Ionian sea on its way,
Fearful his roars and appalling—the vast deep echoing round
Trembled in every wave. Great Italy, scared at the sound,
Thundered, and Aetna groaned from her caverns in darkness drowned.

(*Aen.* iii. 665-74, tr. Sir Charles Bowen.)

The fleet leaves Sicily and is driven to Carthage. Here Aeneas' story ends and we may note the skill with which the tale of these early adventures is put into his mouth: it is a device to

View of Mount Etna from the north

Photograph by Mr. R. Gardner

break monotony employed in the *Odyssey*, commended by Horace, and much used in our own time, e. g. by Joseph Conrad.

The Fourth Book resumes the main tale. By the scheming of Juno and Venus Dido falls in love with her Trojan guest.

SO, all on fire, unhappy Dido roams
Raging throughout the city, as some hind
Shaft-stricken, at unawares 'mid Cretan groves,
Which from far off a shepherd, with his darts
Chasing, hath pierced, and left the wingèd barb
Not knowing; through Dicte's woody glades in flight
She scours, the death-reed sticking in her side.
Now through the city's midst she with her leads
Aeneas, displaying her Sidonian wealth
And town built ready: she essays to speak,
And in mid-utterance stops; now, as day falls,
Seeking the selfsame board, poor fool! she asks
Once more to hear the tale of Ilium's woe,
And hangs upon the speaker's lips once more.
Then, when the guests have parted, when in turn
The low moon hides her radiance, and the stars
Sinking invite to sleep, in the void hall
With lonely grief, on his abandoned couch
She casts her, and, though sundered each from each,
Hears him and sees, or to her bosom clasps
Ascanius, ravished by his father's look,
Her tyrant passion haply to beguile.
The half-reared turrets rise not, the youth ply
No martial exercise, nor harbours build,
Nor bastions for defence in war; the works
Break off suspended, the high-threatening bulk
Of walls, and engines that uptower to heaven.

(*Aen.* iv. 68–89, tr. Rhoades.)

The winter months have been spent in love and idleness when Jupiter sends Mercury to remind Aeneas of his destiny. The Trojan fleet seeks to slip away unseen, but Dido comes upon Aeneas and upbraids him :

'FALSE heart, didst even think to hide
So foul a wrong, and from my land depart
In silence ? Can our love, and hand once joined
In hand, not hold thee, nor the cruel death
In store for Dido ? Nay, beneath the sky
Of winter even dost thou fit out thy fleet,
And 'mid the north wind's blustering haste to go,
O heartless, over-sea ? Why, wert thou not
Bound for strange fields and unknown homes, and were
Troy, as of old, still standing, would'st thou steer
Even for Troy across yon billowy deep ?
Is it from me thou fliest ? by these tears,
By thy right hand, since naught beside, alas !
Myself have left me, by our love's embrace,
And marriage-rites begun, if ever I
Did thee fair service, or if aught I am
Was dear to thee, pity a falling house,
And, if prayers yet have place, I thee conjure,
Cast the thought from thee. For thy sake the tribes
Of Libya hate me, and the nomad chiefs,
And Tyrians turn to foes : for thy sake, too,
Quenched is my honour and good name of old,
By which alone I had access to heaven.
To whom dost thou abandon me to die,
O guest, since even to this has shrunk the name
Of husband ? Wherefore do I linger on ?
Is't that Pygmalion, my brother, may
Pull down, the while, my battlements, or me
Gaetulian Iarbas make his thrall ?
If only, if before thy flight, my arms
Had clasped a child of thine, if in my hall

Some tiny-limbed Aeneas played, to bring
Thee back at least in feature, I had then
Not seemed so wholly captive and forlorn.'
She had said: the other by command of Jove
Kept his eyes fixed, and struggling deep at heart
To smother down the anguish, thus at length
Returns brief answer: 'Naught that thou canst plead
Of all thy countless benefits, O queen,
Shall e'er by me be gainsaid, nor shall I
Tire of Elissa's memory, while of self
Still mindful, while the life-breath guides my limbs.
Brief be my words to meet the need: I ne'er
Took thought—suppose it not—to veil my flight
In secrecy, nor e'er before thee held
The bridegroom's torch, or to such compact came.
Had fate vouchsafed me at mine own free will
Life's course to shape, and, as my own heart prompts,
Make truce with trouble, my first fond care had been
Troy's city, and the dear ashes of my friends;
Priam's tall roof were standing, and this hand
Had, for her vanquished children, from the dust
Requickened Pergamus. But Apollo now,
The lord of Grynium, to great Italy,
To Italy the Lycian oracles,
Bid me repair: this is my love, and this
My country. If, Phoenician as thou art,
The towers of Carthage and a Libyan town
Hold thine eyes gazing, wherefore grudge, I ask,
To Teucrian settlers an Ausonian home?
We too may quest for outland kingdoms: me,
Oft as the night with dewy shade enfolds
The world, oft as the starry fires arise,
My sire Anchises' spirit warns in sleep,
And with its troubled look affrights, me too
The thought of young Ascanius, and the wrong

To that dear head, from whom my fault withholds
Hesperia's empire and predestined fields.
Now too the interpreter of heaven, by Jove
Himself sent down—thy head and mine I call
To witness—through the flying air has brought
A mandate: I myself beheld the god
Entering the city in clear light of day,
And with these ears drank in his accents. Cease
With thy complaints to fire thy soul and mine;
Not self-impelled steer I for Italy.'

(*Aen.* iv. 305–61, tr. Rhoades.)

Aeneas then sets his men to the work of launching the fleet:

Then fall the Teucrians to the work, and all
Along the shore drag down their lofty ships:
The pitched keel floats, and leafy oars they bring,
And timber from the woods unwrought, for flight
So eager: you may mark them on the move,
At every outlet hurrying from the town!
As when ants plunder a huge heap of corn,
Of winter ware, and house it in their store;
Moves a black column o'er the plain, the spoil
In narrow path along the grass convoying;
Some set their shoulders to the ponderous grains,
And push them, some drive up the rearward ranks,
Chiding delay; the whole track seethes with toil.

(*Aen.* iv. 397–407, tr. Rhoades.)

At night the fleet sails. Dido sees it at dawn and curses Aeneas. (The remainder of the poem and the history of Rome's wars with Carthage tell how that curse was fulfilled):

NOW with new ray young Dawn was sprinkling earth,
Leaving Tithonus' saffron couch. The queen,
When first from her high tower she saw the light
Whiten, and all the ships with sails arow
Stand out to sea, and shore and harbour void,

With ne'er an oarsman, thrice and four times o'er
Smote with her hand the lovely breast, and rent
The yellow locks: 'O Jupiter,' she cries,
'Shall he then go, my kingdom put to scorn,
This stranger? will they not bring arms apace,
Pursue from all the city, and some tear loose
The ships from dock? away with speed, fetch fire,
Deal weapons out, ply oars!—what do I say?
Where am I? or what madness warps my wit?
Unhappy Dido! do thine impious deeds
Now touch thee home? it had been seemlier then
When thou wast offering him thy sceptre. Lo!
His hand and word of honour, who, they say,
Carries his country's home-gods where he goes,
And bowed the shoulder to his age-worn sire!
Ah! might I not have seized and rent his limbs,
Cast them piecemeal upon the wave, cut down
His friends—his own Ascanius—and served up
The son for banquet at his father's board?
But doubtful would have proved the chance of war;
Be it so: whom had I to fear, death-doomed?
I to their camp should have borne firebrands, filled
Their decks with flame, and, child and sire and race
Wiped out together, myself have crowned the pile.
O Sun, that with thy torch encompassest
All earthly deeds, and Juno, messenger
And witness of my woes, and Hecate,
Name in the city crossways yelled by night,
And dread avenging sisterhood, and gods
Of dying Elissa,[1] heed ye this, and turn
Your power to ills that earn it, and give ear
Unto my prayers. If that accursèd life
Must reach the harbour, and float safe to shore,
If thus Jove's doom require, here stand the goal,

[1] An alternative name for Dido.

Yet by the sword of a brave race beset,
Outcast from home, and from Iulus' arms
Torn, let him sue for succour, and behold
His friends slain miserably, and when to terms
Of wrongful peace he yields him, let him not
His kingdom or the pleasant light enjoy,
But in the bare mid-plain, before his hour,
Fall and unburied lie. For this I pray,
And this last utterance with my life-blood pour.
And ye, O Tyrians, the whole stock and race
Dog with your hate for ever; to my dust
This boon bequeath ye. Let there be no love,
No league between the nations. O arise,
Unknown avenger, from my tomb, to chase
With fire and sword the Dardan settlers, now,
Hereafter, whensoe'er the strength is given.
Betwixt them, shore with shore, billow with wave,
And host with host, I call down enmity;
Be they themselves, and their sons' sons at war!'

(*Aen.* iv. 584–629, tr. Rhoades.)

At the close of the book Dido in despair takes her own life.

The Fourth Book is modelled in part on the story of the loves of Jason and Medea, as told by the Alexandrine Apollonius Rhodius in his *Argonautica*. It has always been recognized as one of Virgil's noblest works, yet most readers are left with a deep sympathy with Dido, which he can hardly have intended. It is a characteristic of Virgil that he was always just, sometimes too just for his own purposes, to opponents.

After the fervour and excitement of Book IV, the Fifth Book is pitched in a lower key. Aeneas returns to western Sicily and holds funeral games in honour of Anchises, his father, who had died there the year before. The long account of the games is an interruption of the main narrative, yet it has given Virgil an opportunity for some of his most vivid descriptions and even for some of his most human sympathy. We may take as typical the description of the start of the boat-race, which no 'rowing man' could read unmoved:

THEN lots they cast for places; and the chiefs
Themselves upon the poop shine forth afar,
Glorious in gold and purple; for the rest,
The crews are crowned with wreaths of poplar-spray,
And steeped in oil their naked shoulders shine.
They man the thwarts, arms stretched to oars, full stretch
Await the signal: drains each bounding heart
Quick-knocking fear, and the wild thirst for praise.
Then, when the shrill trump sounded, in a trice
All from their bounds leapt forward; a sea-shout
Strikes heaven; the floods foam, churned with indrawn arms.
Abreast they cleave the furrows; the whole main yawns
Convulsed with oars and triple-pointed beaks.
Not in such heady race the two-horsed cars,
Poured from the bounds, grip course and go, nor shake
Their billowy reins above such scouring teams
The drivers, hanging forward to the lash.
Then with applause of men, shouts, favouring cheers,
The whole grove rings: the pent shore rolls along,
And the hills, smitten, buffet back the din.

(*Aen.* v. 132–50, tr. Rhoades.)

When the games are over, Anchises appears to his son and bids him seek the prophetess of Cumae, who will lead him to the lower world, where he will learn the fate of his descendants. The fleet sets sail and on the way loses its helmsman Palinurus. The passage is a powerful piece of Virgilian description:

NOW dewy night
Had well-nigh reached the mid-way goal of heaven;
In slumber calm the crews relaxed their limbs
Beneath the oars, on the hard benches stretched,
When Sleep slid lightly from the stars on high,
Parted the dusky air, and cleft the gloom,
Thee, Palinurus, seeking, and for thee
Fraught with a fatal dream, though innocent.

There on the high stern sat the god, and, like
To Phorbas, pours this utterance from his lips:
'O Palinurus, son of Iasus,
See, of its own will ocean wafts the fleet;
The gales breathe equably; the hour is given
To slumber. Bow the head, and steal from toil
The weary eyes. Myself awhile will take
Thy task upon me.' With scarce lifted look,
To him speaks Palinurus: 'Bid'st thou me
Mark not the sea's smooth face and tranquil waves?
Put faith in such a monster? Wherefore trust
Aeneas to the false breezes, tempt again
The oft-rued treachery of a smiling sky?'
Such words he spake, and clutched and clung, nor aught
Let go the tiller, and held his upward eyes
Still fixed upon the stars: when lo! the god
O'er either temple shakes a bough besprent
With Lethe-dew, and drugged with Stygian power,
That loosed his swimming eyes, reluctant. Scarce
Had the first stealth of unexpected sleep
Slackened his limbs, when, bending from above,
It hurled him headlong, half the stern torn off,
Rudder and all, into the weltering waves,
With many a cry to friends that could not aid.

(*Aen.* v. 835–60, tr. Rhoades.)

Into the Sixth Book Virgil has put his deepest self, and in the description of the lower world he has embodied his philosophy of life and death and his noblest thoughts of the destiny of Rome. After finding the Sibyl at Cumae and plucking the golden bough which is to be his passport Aeneas descends and is ferried across the infernal river:

HENCE leads a road to Acheron, vast flood
Of thick and restless slime: all that foul ooze
It belches in Cocytus. Here keeps watch
That wild and filthy pilot of the marsh

Charon, from whose rugged old chin trails down
The hoary beard of centuries: his eyes
Are fixed, but flame. His grimy cloak hangs loose
Rough-knotted at the shoulder: his own hands
Pole on the boat, or tend the sail that wafts
His dismal skiff and its fell freight along.
Ah, he is old, but with that toughening eld
That speaks his godhead! To the bank and him
All a great multitude come pouring down,
Brothers and husbands, and the proud-souled heroes,
Life's labour done: and boys and unwed maidens
And the young men by whose flame-funeral
Parents had wept. Many as leaves that fall
Gently in autumn when the sharp cold comes
Or all the birds that flock at the turn o' the year
Over the ocean to the lands of light.
They stood and prayed each one to be first taken:
They stretched their hands for love of the other side,
But the grim sailor takes now these, now those:
And some he drives a distance from the shore.
Aeneas, moved and marvelling at this stir,
Cried—'O chaste Sibyl tell me why this throng
That rushes to the river? What desire
Have all these phantoms? and what rule's award
Drives these back from the marge, lets those go over
Sweeping the livid shallows with the oar?'
The old priestess replied in a few words,
'Son of Anchises of true blood divine,
Behold the deep Cocytus and dim Styx
By whom the high gods fear to swear in vain.
This shiftless crowd all is unsepulchred:
The boatman there is Charon: those who embark
The buried. None may leave this beach of horror
To cross the growling stream before that hour
That hides their white bones in a quiet tomb.

A hundred years they flutter round these shores:
Then they may cross the waters long desired.'

(*Aen.* vi. 295–330, tr. J. E. Flecker.)

With the prophetess as his guide he passes from one region to another of the underworld, and after offering the golden bough to Persephone, queen of the lower regions, he reaches at last the Elysian fields:

THE goddess' dues accomplished, they arrived
The happy region and green pleasaunces
Of the blest woodlands, the abode of joy.
An ampler ether with purpureal light
Clothes here the plain; another sun than ours,
And other stars they know. Some ply their limbs
Upon the grassy wrestling-ground, and strive
In sport, and grapple on the tawny sand;
Some, footing, beat the dance, and chant the lay.
Here too the Thracian priest, with trailing robe,
Makes eloquent the seven divided notes
To match their measures, and, with fingers now,
And now with comb of ivory, strikes them. Here
Are Teucer's ancient stock, a glorious line,
The high-souled heroes born in happier years,
Ilus, Assaracus, and Dardanus,
Founder of Troy. He marvels to behold
Their arms and ghostly chariots from afar.
The spears stand fixed in earth; their steeds, unyoked,
Roam grazing o'er the plain. What pride had each,
Alive, in arms and chariot, or what pains
To pasture his sleek steeds, the same no less
Attends them still, now hid beneath the earth.
Lo! some he sees to right hand and to left
Feasting along the greensward, or in choir
Chanting a joyous paean, 'mid a grove
Of perfumed bay, whence risen Eridanus

Rolls wide through forests of the upper world.
Here is the band of those who suffered wounds,
Fighting for country, or, while life remained,
Were priests and pure, or holy bards that spake
Things worthy Phoebus, or who sweetened life
With new-found arts, earning by service wrought
Of some to be remembered—these are all
With snow-white fillet bound about the brow.

(*Aen.* vi. 637–65, tr. Rhoades.)

There he finds his father Anchises who, questioned by Aeneas about the reincarnation of souls, gives a wonderful description of the soul's life and purification after death. For this passage, to which many philosophies have made their contribution, we may take the impressive English hexameters of the Poet Laureate:

ON the level bosom of this vale more thickly the tall trees
Grow, an' aneath quivering poplars and whispering alders
Lethe's dreamy river throu' peaceful scenery windeth.
Whereby now flitted in vast swarms many people of all lands,
As when in early summer honey-bees on a flowery pasture
Pill the blossoms, hurrying to' an' fro,—innumerous are they,
Revisiting the ravish'd lily cups, while all the meadow hums.
Aeneas was turn'd to the sight, and marvelling enquired,
'Say, sir, what the river that there i' the vale-bottom I see?
And who they that thickly along its bank have assembled?'
Then Lord Anchises, 'The spirits for whom a second life
And body are destined ar' arriving thirsty to Lethe,
And here drink th' unmindful draught from wells of oblivyon.
My heart greatly desired of this very thing to acquaint thee,
Yea, and show thee the men to be born, our glory her'after,
So to gladden thine heart where now thy voyaging endeth.'
'Must it then be believ'd, my sire, that a soul which attaineth
Elysium will again submit to her old body-burden?
Is this well? what hap can awake such dire longing in them?
'I will tell thee, O son, nor keep thy wonder awaiting,'

Answereth Anchises, and all expoundeth in order.
' Know first that the heavens, and th' Earth, and space fluid or void,
Night's pallid orb, day's Sun, and all his starry coaevals, '
Are by one spirit inly quickened, and, mingling in each part,
Mind informs the matter, nature's complexity ruling.
Thence the living creatures, man, brute, and ev'ry feather'd fowl,
And what breedeth in Ocean aneath her surface of argent:
Their seed knoweth a fiery vigour, 'tis of airy divine birth,
In so far as unimpeded by an alien evil,
Nor dull'd by the body's framework condemn'd to corruption.
Hence the desires and vain tremblings that assail them, unable
Darkly prison'd to arise to celestial exaltation;
Nor when death summoneth them anon earth-life to relinquish,
Can they in all discard their stain, nor wholly away with
Mortality's plague-spots. It must be that, O, many wild graffs
Deeply at heart engrain'd have rooted strangely upon them:
Wherefore must suffering purge them, yea, Justice atone them
With penalties heavy at their guilt: some purify exposed
Hung to the viewless winds, or others long watery searchings
Cleanse i' the ocean-salt, some bathe in fiery renewal:
Each cometh unto his own retribution,—if after in ample
Elysium we attain, but a few, to the fair Happy Woodland,
Yet slow time still worketh on us to remove the defilement,
Till it hath eaten away the acquir'd dross, leaving again free
That first fiery vigour, the celestial virtue of our life.
All whom here thou seest, have accomplished purification:
Unto the stream of Lethe a god their company calleth,
That forgetful of old failure, pain & disappointment,
They may again into earthly bodies with glad courage enter.'
(*Aen.* vi. 703–51, tr. Bridges.)

Aeneas is then shown the long line of his successors and the heroes of Rome waiting their turn to rise to the world above, and in a few unforgettable lines Anchises tells of Rome's destiny:

OTHERS the breathing brass shall softlier mould,
I doubt not, draw the lineaments of life
From marble, at the bar plead better, trace
With rod the courses of the sky, or tell
The rise of stars: remember, Roman, thou,
To rule the nations as their master: these
Thine arts shall be, to engraft the law of peace,
Forbear the conquered, and war down the proud.'

(*Aen.* vi. 847–53, tr. Rhoades.)

And so Aeneas passes out again to the upper world and rejoins his companions. The first six books of the *Aeneid*, with their strange adventures, may be called Virgil's *Odyssey*: the last six, which tell of Aeneas' landing in Italy and his fight for supremacy, are his *Iliad*. The description of war did not come naturally to Virgil's gentle spirit, and few readers will feel the same pleasure in these later books. Yet they are full of incident and effective description and fuller perhaps than the first half of the poem of fine character-drawing.

The fleet sails from Cumae to the mouth of the Tiber, where Latinus is king over the region later known as Latium. He welcomes the strangers and promises Aeneas the hand of his daughter Lavinia, who had previously been betrothed to Turnus, prince of the Rutulians. Juno sends Allecto, a fury from the lower world, to stir up strife:

ALLECTO hies on Stygian wing to seek
The Teucrians, marking, with a new device,
The spot where fair Iulus on the bank
Snares the wild quarry, or on foot pursues.
Here flings upon his hounds the maid of hell
A sudden fury, and with the well-known scent
Infects their nostrils for the stag's hot chase—
First source of ill, which set the rustic heart
Afire for war. A stag of matchless mould
There was, and spreading antlers, from its dam
Stolen and nourished up by Tyrrheus' sons
And their sire Tyrrheus, of the royal herds

Ruler, and ranger of the wide domain.
Their sister Silvia with all tenderness
Had tamed it to obedience, and would deck
Its antlers and with pliant wreaths entwine,
Comb the wild thing, and in pure water lave.
Trained to her hand, and at the master's board
Familiar, it would wander in the woods,
And of itself again, how late soe'er,
Home to the well-known threshold wend its way.
Now wandering wide, Iulus' ravening hounds
Amid their hunt aroused it, as down stream
It chanced to float, or on the grassy bank
The heat allayed. Ascanius, too, himself
Fired with the love of peerless praise, bent bow
And levelled shaft, nor swerved his hand for lack
Of a god guiding; and with loud whirr, driven
Through belly and through flank, the bolt sped home.
But to the well-known roof for shelter fled
The stricken beast, into the homestead crept
Moaning, and, blood-bedabbled, with loud plaint,
As supplicating aid, filled all the house.
First sister Silvia, smiting hand on arm,
Cries out for help, and summons the stout hinds.
They, for within the silent forest yet
Lurks the fell pest, ere looked for, are at hand,
One with fire-hardened stake for weapon, one
With heavily knotted club: what every hand
First groping found, wrath makes a tool of war.
Tyrrheus, just cleaving, as it chanced, an oak
With wedges' force split four-wise, gripped an axe,
And breathing out fierce rage, cheers on the band.
But from her watch-tower the grim goddess now,
Seizing the hour for mischief, to the stall's
High roof repairs, and from its summit winds
A pastoral point of war, on wreathèd horn

Straining the hellish note: from end to end
Shuddered the whole grove, and the forest-depths
Re-echoed: heard it Trivia's lake afar,
Heard it Nar's river, white with sulphurous wave,
And Velia's springs; and mothers at the sound
Trembled, and clasped their children to their breasts,
Then, hurrying at the call, the signal-blast
By the dread trumpet given, from every side
The dauntless husbandmen snatch arms and rush
Together: nor less the Trojan youth pour forth
Aid for Ascanius through the open gates.
The ranks are set: no more in rustic strife
Is plied the knotty club or fire-seared stake;
Nay, but with two-edged steel they fight it out,
While the dark harvest bristles far and wide
With naked sword-blades, and the flash of brass
Sun-fretted darts its radiance to the clouds:
As, when a wave beneath the rising gale
'Gins whiten, the sea slowly heaves, and rears
Its billows higher, then from the lowest deep
Mounts in one mass to heaven.

(*Aen.* vii. 476–530, tr. Rhoades.)

Here we have Virgil, at first in his more tender mood, then vividly portraying the fever of strife.

War breaks out and Aeneas sails up the Tiber to seek the help of the Arcadian prince Evander, who dwells on the hills where Rome was afterwards to stand. This gives a great opening for Virgil's antiquarianism, and we find Evander showing his guest all the spots which were afterwards to be famous and telling their legends. On the Palatine he shows him the cave which Hercules burst open to slay the giant Cacus, who had stolen the hero's cattle:

A SHARP peak
Stood there, with rocky sides up-rising sheer
Above the cave's back, far as sight could soar,
Fit dwelling for foul birds to build in. This,

As headlong from the ridge it leftward leaned
Over the river, from the right he shook
Straining against it, and up-wrenched, and tore
Loose from its lowest roots, then suddenly
Launched forth ; and, as he launched it, bellowed loud
The mighty welkin, and asunder leapt
The river banks, and the affrighted stream
Flowed backward. But the cave and ample hall
Of Cacus lay discovered, bare to view,
With its dark hollows yawning to their depth :
As the rent earth should open wide her mouth,
Unlock the infernal dwellings and disclose
The pale realm hated of the gods, whereby
The vasty gulf should from above be seen,
And the ghosts tremble, as floods in the light.

(*Aen.* viii. 233–46, tr. Rhoades.)

The Ninth Book narrates the gathering of the clans on either side and the attack on the Trojan camp in Aeneas' absence. Aeneas relieves the camp with the aid of Arcadian and Etrurian allies. In the course of the fighting described in the Tenth Book Turnus kills Pallas, son of Evander, while Aeneas slays Lausus, who was protecting his wounded father, Mezentius, driven from the throne of Agylla for his cruelty. The body of Lausus is brought to the rescued Mezentius, who reproaches himself :

'DID then such joy of life
Possess me, O my son, that in my stead
I suffered thee, even thee whom I begat,
To meet the foeman's stroke ? Am I, thy sire,
Saved through thy wounds, and living by thy death ?
Ah ! to my sorrow now at last I know
What exile is ! now is the wound pushed home.
Yea, and I too with infamy, my son,
Thy name have spotted, by men's hate of me
Thrust from the throne and sceptre of my sires !
To mine own country and my people's spite

I should have paid the forfeit, by all deaths
Freely have yielded up this guilty life.
Now I live on, from men and light of day
Not yet departing; but depart I will.'
So saying, at once upon his wounded thigh
He raised him, and, albeit from the deep wound
His force flagged somewhat, with no downcast air
Called for his war-steed. This was ay his pride,
And this his solace; hereon he was wont
From all his wars to ride victorious home.
The sorrowing creature now he thus bespeaks:
'We have lived long, O Rhaebus, if aught long
Pertain to mortals. Or to-day shalt thou
Bear back in triumph the bloody spoils and head
Of yon Aeneas, and be of Lausus' pangs
My co-avenger, or, if all force fail
Our path to open, shalt beside me lie:
No, nor wilt thou, methinks, my bravest, deign
Brook stranger's bidding, or a Teucrian lord.'

(*Aen.* x. 846–66, tr. Rhoades.)

Aeneas kills Mezentius and then turns to the tent where the body of Pallas is surrounded by mourners:

HE likewise, when the pillowed head
And face of Pallas snowy-white he saw,
And marked the Ausonian spear-head's gaping wound
On his smooth breast, spake with o'er-welling tears:
'Poor boy, did fortune, when so blithe she came,
Envy me thee, that thou shouldst never look
Upon my realm, or home in triumph ride?
Not such my parting promise touching thee
Made to thy sire Evander, when he clasped
And sped me forth to win a mighty realm,
And, fearful, warned me that right brave the foe,
Stubborn the race, we strove with. And now he,

With empty hope fooled utterly, belike
Is proffering vows, and heaping high with gifts
The altars; we, the while, a lifeless corse,
That owes no more to any god in heaven,
Escort with sorrow's ineffectual pomp.
Unhappy, thou that wilt behold thy son
Slain piteously! Is this the home-return,
The expected triumph? This my solemn pledge?
Yet here no recreant, scarred, with shameful wounds,
Shalt see, Evander, nor a son so saved
That thou, his sire, for dreaded death shalt pray.
Ah me! Ausonia, what a tower of help
Here art thou reft of, and, Iulus, thou!'
So, having wept his fill, he bids them lift
The hapless corse, and picks a thousand men
From his whole host, and sends them to escort
The farewell pomp, and with the father's tears
Their own commingle—for so vast a grief
Scant solace, yet to that sad father due.
Others of arbute-boughs and oaken shoots
In haste plait hurdle-wise a pliant bier,
And the heaped bed with leafy covering shroud.
High on the rustic litter him they lay;
Even as a flower by maiden's finger culled,
Or violet mild, or drooping hyacinth,
Ere yet the lustre or the loveliness
Hath from its form departed; mother Earth
Feeds it no longer, nor with strength supplies.

(*Aen.* xi. 39–71, tr. Rhoades.)

He sends comrades to bear the dead son back to Evander and bids his own farewell:

But when the long procession of his friends
Had wholly passed, Aeneas, groaning deep,
Stopped, and spake further: 'Unto other tears

We by the same grim destinies of war
Are summoned hence. I bid thee hail! for aye,
O mightiest Pallas, and for aye farewell.'

(*Aen.* xi. 94–8, tr. Rhoades.)

Meanwhile a council of war is held in the city of Latinus. An orator, Drances (said to be modelled on Cicero), taunts Turnus, who replies in anger:

'LAVISH, I wot, is aye thy wealth of tongue,
Drances, when war demandeth hands, and when
The sires are summoned, there the first art thou.
Nathless naught need we fill our court with words,
Which, big albeit, fly from thee safe enow,
While the wall-rampart keeps the foe at bay,
Nor blood yet drowns the trenches. Ay, let peal
The wordy thunder; 'tis thy wont of old;
And charge me, Drances, thou, with cowardice,
Seeing thy hand hath reared such slaughter-heaps
Of Teucrians, and set all the fields ablaze
With trophies. What the pulse of valour can,
Yet may'st thou prove: nor far methinks to seek,
But round our very ramparts swarm the foe.
We march to meet them: wherefore hold'st aback?
Or will the war-god ever make his home
But in that windy tongue, those flying feet?
What, vanquished? I? Will any, thou foul liar,
Flout me as vanquished justly, who beholds
Tiber still swelling o'er with Ilian blood,
Evander's whole house by the roots laid low,
And his Arcadians stripped of arms? Not such
Did Bitias prove me, and huge Pandarus,
Nor whom, a thousand in a single day,
My victor-arm to nether Tartarus hurled,
Penned and shut fast within the foeman's wall.
"No safety in war?" Such brainless bodings keep

For thine own fortune, and the Dardan's head.
Ay, cease not with gross panic to whelm all
In wide confusion, laud to heaven the might
Of a twice-conquered nation, and decry
Latinus' arms beside it. Now, forsooth,
The Myrmidonian lords and Tydeus' son
Tremble before the Phrygian host, now, too,
Achilles of Larissa; and Aufidus
From Hadria's waves flees backward. Or, again,
When feigns the schemer's villainy to cower
Before my chiding, and with terror whets
The sting of calumny! Nay, such a life—
Cease to be troubled—by this hand of mine
Ne'er shalt thou forfeit; let it with thee dwell,
Of that thy breast fit denizen.'

(*Aen.* xi. 378–410, tr. Rhoades.)

But Aeneas is advancing on the town and the council breaks up to oppose him. Among Turnus' allies is the maiden-warrior Camilla, dear to Diana. The goddess tells the girl's story to Opis, one of her attendant nymphs:

'LO! to the cruel war
Goes forth Camilla, maiden, and in vain
Girds on these arms of ours, though dear to me
Beyond all others. Nor soothly is that love,
Thou knowest, new-born to Dian, nor her heart
Touched with a sudden charm. When Metabus,
Now driven through hate of his tyrannic sway
Forth from his realm, Privernum's ancient hold
Was leaving, through the battle's press he bore
His babe in flight, to share his banishment,
And named her from her mother, in altered wise,
Camilla for Casmilla. To the long
Lone forest-heights he sped, still carrying her
Before him on his bosom. From all sides

Fierce darts beset him, and in circling swarms
Hovered the Volscian soldiery, when lo!
Athwart his flight full Amasenus' flood
Foamed with o'er-brimming banks; so wild a storm
Had burst the clouds of heaven. Here, fain to swim,
Love for the babe withholds him, and he quakes
For his dear burden. Pondering every way,
Hardly at last this swift resolve took root:
A huge spear, which the warrior's stalwart hand
Bare, of hard-knotted and fire-seasoned oak—
To this he lashed his daughter, swathed in bark
Of the wild cork, and midmost of the shaft
Bound her for throwing, and then, with mighty hand
Poising it, cried to heaven: "O gracious Maid,
Child of Latona, hauntress of the grove,
I vow this babe thy servant, I her sire;
Thy weapon first she grasps, and from her foe
Flies through the air, thy suppliant. For thine own,
Goddess, receive her, I implore, who now
Is to the random breezes given." He spake,
Drew back his arm, and strongly wheeled the spear,
And threw it: the waves roared; over the swift stream
Flies poor Camilla on the hurtling dart.
But Metabus, by a mighty band the while
Pressed closelier, plunges, and in triumph plucks
His gift to Trivia from the grassy bank,
Javelin and maid together. Him thenceforth
Nor homes of men, nor city-walls received;
Nor had his wild heart brooked it, but he led
A life of shepherds on the lonely hills.
Here in the brakes, amid rough forest-dens,
Reared he his daughter upon wild mare's milk,
Squeezing the teats into her tender lips.
Soon as the baby-feet their earliest steps
Had planted, with sharp javelin's weight he armed

Her hands, and from the tiny shoulder hung
Shafts and a bow. For gold to deck her hair,
And for long-trailing robe, a tiger's spoils
Hung from her head adown the back. Even then
With tender hand she launched her puny darts,
And, whirling round her head the smooth-thonged sling,
Struck crane Strymonian, or white swan, to earth.
Her many a mother through the Tyrrhene towns
Sought for their sons, but vainly. Well content
To mate alone with Dian, she cherishes
A lifelong passion for the hunter's darts
And maidenhood unsullied. Would she had ne'er
Caught up by such a wave of war, essayed
To brave in fight the Teucrians! so were she
Still dear, and of my maiden band to-day.'

(*Aen.* xi. 535–86, tr. Rhoades.)

After many deeds of valour Camilla falls, and though Opis avenges her, the Trojans are victorious. Negotiations are opened, but broken off. Aeneas is wounded, but miraculously restored, and the followers of Turnus waver. Juturna, his divine sister, drives her brother's chariot and avoids Aeneas:

EVEN as a black swift through the mansion flits
Of some rich lord, and skims the lofty hall
With circling pinion, for her noisy brood
Some tiny morsels gleaning, and now whirrs
Adown the empty corridors, and now
Round the moist fish-ponds; with like course to hers,
Juturna through the thickest foemen drives,
Careering o'er the field with flying car.
Now here, now there, her brother she displays
In triumph, yet suffers not in fight to close,
But whirls far off away.

(*Aen.* xii. 473–80, tr. Rhoades.)

The Altar of Turnus and Juturna

Photograph by Mr. Percival Hart

But the town is attacked, and to save it Turnus resolves to fight Aeneas :

HE spake, and swiftly leapt from car to plain,
And dashed through foes, through javelins, and there left
His sister sorrowing, and at furious speed
Cleaves the mid battle-ranks. As when a crag
From mountain-top shoots headlong, torn away
By the wind's blast—whether with stormy shower
Washed free, or loosened by slow lapse of years—
With mighty rush relentless the mass swings
Down the abyss, and riots o'er the plain,
Men, flocks, and forests rolled along with it ;
So rushes Turnus through the scattered ranks
On to the city-walls, where streams the earth
Deepest with torrent-gore, and sings the wind
With missiles, and there beckons with his hand,
And with loud voice begins : ' Rutulians, hold,
And hold your darts, ye Latins ; mine to-day
The award of Fortune, whatsoe'er it be.
Let me—'tis meeter—for your broken troth
Sole penance pay, my sword alone decide.'
The mid ranks part asunder and make room.
But Prince Aeneas, hearing Turnus' name,
Forsakes the wall, forsakes the lofty towers,
Spurns all delay, breaks off all enterprise,
Exultant, and clangs terribly his arms :
Vast as mount Athos, or as Eryx vast ;
Old Apennine no vaster, when he roars
Through all his quivering holm-oaks, and aloft
With snowy crest soars jubilant to heaven.
Rutulians, Trojans, and Italians all
Turn emulous eyes—who held the lofty towers,
Nor less who battered at the walls below—
And shield from shoulder drop. Latinus even
Stood all amazed those mighty ones to see,

Born in far distant climes, met man to man,
To try the sword's arbitrament. But they,
Soon as the plain gave open space, dart forth,
Hurl from afar their spears, and with loud clang
Of brazen bucklers dash into the fray.
Earth groans, and thick and fast the sword-strokes shower,
Valour with chance commingling. Even as when
On mighty Sila or Taburnus' top
Two bulls for fierce encounter each on each
Rush, brow to brow; the affrighted keepers fly;
The herd stands hushed in fear; the heifers muse
Which of the twain shall lord it o'er the grove,
Which all the kine must follow; they mix amain
Blow upon blow, and gore with butting horns;
Blood streams o'er neck and shoulder; all the grove
Rebellows with the roar: not otherwise
Trojan Aeneas and the Daunian chief
Clash shields together; the vast din fills heaven.

(*Aen.* xii. 681–724, tr. Rhoades.)

Jupiter, resolved now that the end must come, sends a Fury to be the sign of doom to Turnus and Juturna:

EVEN as in dreams of night, when languorous sleep
Weighs down the eyelids, with vain wish we seem
Some eager course to ply, but helpless sink
Even in mid effort; and the tongue lacks power,
And the limbs' wonted strength besteads us not,
Nor voice nor utterance follows: even so,
Strain as his valour might, the goddess fell
Bars Turnus from fulfilment.

(*Aen.* xii. 908–14, tr. Rhoades.)

Aeneas, maddened at the sight of Pallas' belt around the shoulders of Turnus, will have no mercy. And so the *Aeneid* ends: the first prophetic step is taken and Aeneas' race have become the masters of Italy.

In the reign of Nero, MARCUS LUCANUS (A.D. 39–65), a Spaniard and the nephew of the philosopher Seneca, attempted once more a historical epic in something of the manner of Ennius, choosing as his subject the war of Caesar and Pompey. The *Pharsalia* is the work of a very young man, but it was also from its very nature almost foredoomed to failure. In the first place Lucan chose a subject from a very recent and well authenticated period of history, essentially intractable for the poet. Again, he did not propose to write an epic like Ennius's, of which the real theme was the greatness of Rome. The *Pharsalia* is in fact a political pamphlet: Pompey is its hero and in his constant support of the senatorial party against Caesar Lucan is, as Nero knew well enough, covertly attacking the imperial rule. A political pamphlet is even less adapted to poetical treatment than historical narrative. Further, Lucan, with a naturally tortuous mind, had been educated in the rhetorical schools, and rhetoric under the empire meant brilliance, epigram, cleverness, finesse. Yet with all these defects the *Pharsalia* contains fine passages, where poetry bursts through the artificial crust and political bias gives place to true feeling and insight. We may quote a few typical pieces. Take first the description of the two great antagonists in the Civil War. Here are Pompey and Caesar:

ONE aged grown
Had long exchanged the corselet for the gown:
In peace forgotten the commander's art,
And learned to play the politician's part,—
To court the suffrage of the crowd, and hear
In his own theatre the venal cheer;
Idly he rested on his ancient fame,
And was the shadow of a mighty name,
Like the huge oak which towers above the fields,
Decked with ancestral spoils and votive shields;
Its roots, once mighty, loosened by decay,
Hold it no more: weight is its only stay;
Its naked limbs bespeak its glories past,
And by its trunk, not leaves, a shade is cast.

(*Phars.* i. 129–40, tr. Goldwin Smith.)

NOT such the talisman of Caesar's name,
But Caesar had, in place of empty fame,
The unresting soul, the resolution high
That shuts out every thought but victory.
Whate'er his goal, nor mercy nor dismay
He owned, but drew the sword and cleft his way;
Pressed each advantage that his fortune gave;
Constrained the stars to combat for the brave;
Swept from his path whate'er his rise delayed,
And marched triumphant through the wreck he made.

(*Phars.* i. 143–50, tr. Goldwin Smith.)

There is power in these characterizations, as there is genuine pathos in the following description of Pompey's last night before the fatal battle of Pharsalus:

BUT night, the last glad hours of Magnus' life,
Beguiled his anxious slumbers with vain visions.
There in the theatre himself had built
He seemed to sit, and see the multitude
Innumerable of Rome; his was the name
By joyful voices lifted to the stars;
The roaring benches vied in their applause.
So once in days of old a youth he saw them
And heard their cheers in his first triumph's hour. . . .
Perhaps thy sleep, in torment for the morrow,
Now fortune failed, fled back to happier days;
Perhaps in wonted riddles it foretold
Of thy fair dreams the contrary, and brought
Omens of mighty woe; or, since no more
Might fortune let thee see thy father's house,
In dreams she gave thy city to thy sight.
Break not his slumbers, guardians of the camp;
Let ne'er a trumpet strike his ears; for dread

Shall be to-morrow's slumber, by the shades
Dismal of that disastrous day's defeat
Haunted, and bringing up before his eyes
On all sides armies doomed, on all sides war.

(*Phars.* vii. 7–27.)

Take lastly another fine passage in which Cato, the Stoic, refuses to consult the oracle of Jupiter Hammon: it is full of Roman character and of that deeper religious feeling which Lucan's uncle, Seneca, had done much to associate with Stoicism:

'WHAT, Labienus, would'st thou have me ask?
Whether 'tis better to die free in arms
Than live to see a tyranny? If life
Is nothing worth, however long? If age
Doth profit? Whether any force can harm
The good? If Fortune threatens virtue vainly?
If 'tis enough to will what merits praise,
And right ne'er needs the crown of good success?
All this we know, and Hammon in our hearts
No deeper can implant it. One and all
We have communion with the gods, we act,
Though oracles be silent, at their prompting.
Deity needs no voice; to all at birth
Our author told us what 'tis ours to know;
Nor chose these barren sands that but a few
Should hear his truth deep whelmed in desert dust.
God's temple is the earth, the sea, the air,
The sky, the pure in heart. Why seek we further?
All thou dost see, all thou dost feel, is Jove.
Doubters and waverers may crave the help
Of divination; by no oracles
But by sure death am I made sure. The brave
And coward both must fall; this Jupiter
Hath told. It is enough.'

(*Phars.* ix. 566–84.)

From the silver age of Domitian's reign two more epics have come down to us, both on legendary subjects. We have seen[1] how the *Argonautica* of Apollonius Rhodius was of service to Virgil: it had, in fact, been closely reproduced in Rome's Alexandrine age by Varro Atacinus. Valerius Flaccus, who died about A.D. 90, now once more handled the theme of the voyage of the Argo in search of the golden fleece. He was more independent of Apollonius, but in the silver age the pedantry of Alexandria had once again got hold of Roman poets. The poem is difficult and crabbed in expression, the Latin is often forced, and there is a lack of swing about it all. But it has its merits: there is a sustained feeling (apparent also in Apollonius) of a weird and supernatural background which runs through the poem, and there are passages of great, though perhaps rather effeminate, beauty. We may take as typical a really fine description of the adventurers' first night in the Black Sea:

THE hour increased their fears; they saw heaven's vault
Wheel round, and peaks and plains snatched from their view;
Horror of darkness wrapped them all about.
The very quiet of all things, the silence
Of the whole universe affrights them, stars
And heaven begemmed with streaming locks of gold.
As one benighted amid paths unknown
Pursues his devious journey through the gloom,
Finding no rest for eye or ear, for black
The plain lies round him, vaster through the night
The trees loom thronging; all conspire to deepen
His terror of the dark—so trembled they.

(*Arg.* ii. 38–47.)

Caius Papinius Statius, a schoolmaster of Naples, while instructing his pupils in the art of Latin verse-writing, made himself into a respectable poet. He wrote occasional verse, one gem of which is quoted elsewhere (p. 90), and chose as the subject of an epic on a grand scale a legend of Thebes, the story of the attack made by Polynices and the Argive chiefs on the city, then in the hands of his brother Eteocles. The theme was

[1] p. 36.

new to Rome, but it cannot be said to have been made enthralling by Statius: his manner is prolix and tedious and the story does not move: his language is even more strained than that of Flaccus. But the *Thebais* had a great fame in the Middle Ages and, if we can get over the faults of style, we find in it a certain power of description and some sense of natural beauty. Two short passages will suffice to illustrate it. First the description of the child Opheltes at play:

BUT the child
Upon the bosom of the vernal earth
Lying face downward, now in the deep herbage
Crawling lays low the yielding grass, for milk
Athirst now cries to his loved nurse, and then,
All smiles again, with infant lips frames words
In stumbling speech, marvels at silvan sounds,
Gathers what lies before him, open-mouthed
Drinks in the day, knows naught of the grove's perils,
But roams around with ne'er a care in life.

(*Theb.* 4. 784–94.)

Then the scene of the ambush laid for Tydeus, the Argive ambassador, who had given offence by his free speaking at Thebes. We feel that he is a human hero, and may be content to leave him in safety, and not read on to his superhuman slaughter of forty-nine foes single-handed:

NIGHT'S dewy veil began to shroud the sun
And pour its sable shadow o'er the land.
Nearing the woods he from a lofty knoll
Saw warriors' shields and crested helmets flash;
Where the boughs parted 'mid the shade before him
The moonbeams shimmered over arms of bronze.
He stayed not, though amazed; only to hand
Made ready his sharp spears and deep-sheathed sword.
He first broke silence: 'Whence come ye?' he asked
In fear yet haughty still; 'Why lurk ye armed?'
Dread silence told no faith nor peace was there.

Hurled by the mighty arm of Chthonius,
The troop's commander, clove the dusky air
A spear, but fortune aided not the cast.
Yet through the Calydonian boar's dark hide
O'er his left shoulder, nigh to blood, the point
Pierced, and the shaft smote vainly on his throat.
Then rose his hair, at his heart froze the blood,
This way and that, pale with fierce wrath, he turned
Both mind and eye; waited this host for him?
'Burst forth to meet me on the open plain!
Why fear ye, why such cowardice? Alone,
Alone I call.' Forthwith from many a nook
E'en more than he had feared rushed into view;
These from the ridges, those throng from the vales
Or from the plain itself; o'er all the way
Gleam arms; so cordoned beasts at the first cry
Break cover; time for thought was none; one way
Alone was open; for the heights he makes
Of the dread Sphinx, and climbs, his clutching hands
Torn on sharp rocks, and so the cliff's top gains.

(*Theb.* ii. 527–57.)

With Valerius Flaccus and Statius the long story of Roman epic comes to a close, for it is better to pass almost in silence over the *Punica* of Silius Italicus (A.D. 26–101). In a dreary work of seventeen books he rehearsed again the story of the Second Punic War, already treated far better by Naevius and Ennius. In agreement with an interesting criticism on the *Pharsalia*, put in the mouth of one of his characters by Petronius,[1] Silius introduced into an historical poem all the machinery of gods and goddesses, which seems to us appropriate only to a legendary theme. It is a sad ending, but perhaps the gradual decline of the imperial age serves to enhance the fine robustness of the early Republican poets and the lofty supremacy of Virgil.

[1] Satyricon 118.

LYRICS AND OCCASIONAL VERSE

MUCH Roman 'Lyric' verse is 'occasional'—that is to say, it is prompted by some event or incident which gives the author a theme for reflection or the expression of some emotion which can be suitably uttered in 'song' form; but the converse is not necessarily true—many happenings call for an epigram or an epitaph, a lampoon or a descriptive piece which cannot be classed as lyric. The verses which appear in *Punch* are typical occasional poems of the modern type, and have many Roman counterparts in Catullus and Horace: but Martial is *par excellence* the composer of Latin occasional verse; for style and finish, for sardonic wit and cleverness, his best epigrams have rarely been surpassed. It is not without reason that Latin is still widely used for epitaphs and dedicatory inscriptions: no other language can 'hit the point' with such an economy of words. In Lyrics, as in all other types of poetry, the Roman poets of classical times were entirely indebted to Greek originals for their metres: the primitive Italian 'Saturnian' metre had disappeared from literature by the end of the third century B. C., and had it not been for Greek models, the lyrical poems of Catullus and Horace would probably never have been written. It would, however, be unjust to accuse the Romans of plagiarism in borrowing metrical forms which had been already brought to perfection by the Greeks: although it often imitates or translates Greek originals, Roman Lyric poetry possesses marked individual features which entitle it to be considered one of the most vigorous and authentic manifestations of the Roman genius. Catullus and Horace made no attempt to conceal what they owed to Greece; yet few poets have equalled the grace and passion of Catullus, while Horace, in his Odes, crystallized the spirit of the Augustan age in verses combining perfect felicity of expression with a shrewd and cheerful outlook upon life, which have given him perhaps a more universal popularity than any other ancient author.

Greek Lyric poetry was of two main types[1]—the personal utterance of the writer who reveals his own thoughts and feelings in love songs, drinking-songs, reflections upon life from his own individual point of view, and the Choric song which celebrates some noteworthy event of general interest by means of a band

[1] See Murray, *Ancient Greek Literature*, pp. 90 ff.

of singers and dancers. The two most famous representatives of the first type were the Lesbians, Alcaeus and Sappho (towards the end of the seventh century B. C.). Simonides of Keos (556–468 B. C.) and the Boeotian Pindar (522–448 B. C.) were the two greatest of the professional lyric poets, who were employed to compose special odes on memorable occasions. Pindar, whose odes commemorating victories in the great games of Greece have been preserved to us, was much more than a mere 'laureate': although he wrote to order, he was a true poet, with a sublimity of diction and a depth of religious feeling which place him among the world's great poets. Horace, while acknowledging his supremacy, counts all attempts to imitate him as presumption foredoomed to failure, and considers his elaborate dithyrambs to be bound by no regular metrical laws. Yet, while Alcaeus and Sappho and other poets of their kind were the models for many of Horace's most charming poems, it was Pindar who inspired him to introduce into Roman poetry the most splendid of his innovations—the national patriotic lyric. Perhaps the greatest difference between Greek and Roman Lyric poetry lies in the fact that Greek lyrics were written to be sung—the music was in fact an essential part of the poem—whereas the Roman lyric was, as a rule, unaccompanied. There are other Greek influences to be noted, especially upon the side of 'occasional' verses: among these were the pungent invective of Archilochus and Hipponax, who were masters of scurrilous abuse; the elegies of Mimnermus and Theognis; and, above all, the learned but frigid 'conceits' of the Alexandrine School, who flourished at the court of the Ptolemies in the third and second centuries B. C., a period when creative inspiration was largely replaced by technical skill, elaborate excursions into the by-ways of mythology, and a vein of romance which was apt to degenerate into morbid, self-centred sentimentality. The influence of Alexandrinism was especially strong at Rome during the first half of the last century B. C., and many traces of it can be seen in the work of the first[1] great Roman Lyric poet, GAIUS VALERIUS CATULLUS (? 84–54 B. C.).[2] A native of Verona, in the Province of Cisalpine Gaul, not yet incorporated in Italy, Catullus shows many traits of the Celtic temperament, in the violence of his passions, his tenderness and gaiety, his sudden changes of mood, his delight

[1] Laevius (born about 129 B. C.) was probably the first Roman poet who wrote in lyric metres derived from Greece: but only fragments remain.

[2] See pp. 21, 130 ff.

in natural scenery, his feeling for romance: no Roman poet has less of the traditional Roman qualities of restraint and self-control.[1] His short and stormy career was in keeping with his neurotic temperament: while still in the early twenties, he appears as a member of the 'smart set' in Rome, where, in the company of other young men of fashion, he plunged into the gay life of intrigue, and fell a victim to one of the most notorious and fascinating women of the day, Clodia, wife of Metellus Celer—the Lesbia of his poems.

The *liaison* lasted for a few short years, during which the poet passed through every phase of emotion from white-hot passion through suspicion and disillusion to vindictive bitterness, when the shameless conduct of Clodia finally drove him to leave Rome as a member of the staff of Memmius, governor of Bithynia in Asia Minor, in 57 B. C.

The following poems illustrate the varying emotions which this lawless and tragic love-affair produced in the heart of Catullus:

Lesbia's Dead Sparrow

WEEP, weep, ye Loves and Cupids all,
And ilka Man o' decent feelin':
My lassie's lost her wee, wee bird,
And that's a loss, ye'll ken, past healin'.

The lassie lo'ed him like her een:
The darling wee thing lo'ed the ither,
And knew and nestled to her breast,
As ony bairnie to her mither.

Her bosom was his dear, dear haunt—
So dear, he cared na lang to leave it;
He'd nae but gang his ain sma' jaunt,
And flutter piping back bereavit.

The wee thing 's gane the shadowy road
That 's never travelled back by ony:
Out on ye, Shades! ye're greedy aye
To grab at aught that 's brave and bonny.

[1] It is, however, doubtful whether the Romans really were possessed of these qualities to a marked extent, or merely regarded them as ideals which they strove to attain: Cicero was no model of self-control.

Puir, foolish, fondling, bonnie bird,
Ye little ken what wark ye're leavin' :
Ye've gar'd my lassie's een grow red,
Those bonnie een grow red wi' grievin'.

(iii.[1] tr. Anon. *Oxford Book of Latin Verse.*)

LESBIA mine, let 's live and love!
Give no doit for tattle of
Crabbed old censorious men ;
Suns may set and rise again,
But when our short day takes flight
Sleep we must one endless night.
Kiss me times a thousand o'er,
Then a hundred, then once more
Thousand, hundred—and once more!
Then, so many kisses kissed,
Mix the count, that it be missed,
And no evil tongue may scold
Such a many kisses told.

(v.[1] tr. Sir William Marris.[2])

I HATE, I love—the cause thereof
Belike you ask of me:
I do not know, but feel 'tis so,
And I'm in agony.

(lxxxv. tr. Marris.)

WHENE'ER to man who hungers hopelessly
His dream comes true, then that is sheer delight ;
So, Lesbia, that you have come back to me
Is joy more dear than gold is to my sight,
Who longed and longed but never hoped for you.
And you've come back to me! O day of bliss!

[1] These two poems and many others by Catullus are written in the Hendecasyllabic (Eleven syllables) Metre attempted by Tennyson in 'O you chorus of indolent reviewers'. Catullus probably introduced this metre into Roman literature; it was afterwards used with effect by Martial.

[2] Clarendon Press, 1924.

Who is as happy as am I ? or who
Can think of aught in life as sweet as this ?

(cvii. tr. Marris.)

IF it be good to mind each kindly act,
Good for a man to feel he 's been a friend
And kept his promise, nor in any pact
Abused the gods to serve a treacherous end,
Then for long days to come, Catullus, you've
Pleasures laid up from your unthankful love.
For all that men could do or say that 's kind
To man, all these things have you done or said.
They 're lost—you trusted in a thankless mind ;
Wherefore of them why longer vex your head ?
No, brace your mind and think no more thereof ;
Throw off this gloom that comes not from the gods ;
'Tis hard to drop at once old-standing love,
'Tis hard ; but do it, ay, at any odds !
'Tis the one chance and you must struggle through it,
Impossible or not, you've got to do it.
O gods, if ye can pity, or if e'er
Ye helped a man by very death oppressed,
Look on my pain, and if my life be fair
Preserve me from this ruin and this pest !
O what a torpor doth my limbs o'er-wear
And driveth all the gladness from my breast !
Not now I ask, she love me once again,
Nor (since it cannot be) that chaste she be,
But make me whole and rid me of this bane ;
Gods, grant me this thing for my piety.

(lxxvi. tr. Marris.)

FORGO your dream, poor fool of love,
And write your certain losses off ;
Time was the sun shone bright on you
And where she led you you would go,

She who was loved as shall be none!
Ay, then and there you had your fun,
And bright and warm the sun did glow,
When you desired, nor she said 'No';
Ah, yes, the sun shone bright on you!
Now 'No' she says: do you decline
To run behind, and peak and pine;
With mind resolved endure, be tough.
Good-bye, my girl; it is enough,
Catullus wants no grudging love.
But you'll be sorry when I sue
No more o' nights; what will you do?
Who'll come to you or praise your bloom?
Whom will you love? belong to whom?
Whom will you kiss? whose lips will fret?
But bide, Catullus, firm and set.

(viii. tr. Marris.)

Catullus did not live many years after his breach with Clodia, but his spirits recovered enough for him to delight in his return from the East to his home at Sirmio, at the southern end of Lake Garda, whose praises he sings in this beautiful piece:

MY pearl of all peninsulas and isles,
That Neptune nurses in the lucent mere
Or on the waste of ocean, Sirmio dear!
To thee again I come, all joy and smiles,
Hardly believing I have left awhiles
Those Asian plains, and see thee nestling here.
What joy is like it? to be quit of care
And drop my load, and after weary miles
Come home, and sink upon the bed that so
I used to dream of: this one thing is worth
All that long service. Hail, sweet Sirmio!
Welcome thy lord with laughter, and give back
Your laughter, waters of the Lydian lake:
Laugh, home of mine, with all your maddest mirth.

(xxxi. tr. Marris.)

The ' Grotto of Catullus ' at Sirmio on the shores of Lake Garda

Photograph by Mr. G. Lavo

It would be impossible to give examples of every side of Catullus's genius: some of his most striking poems are too long and elaborate to be classed as lyrics: some are infected with Alexandrinism and wear an air of artificiality which mingles quaintly with the fresh grace of his imagination: some are disfigured by the most coarse invective. The charm and brightness which rarely fail him can be seen in the humorous address to his farm:

DEAR Sabine or Tiburtine clods,
(They say 'Tiburtine', who would please
Catullus, while his enemies
Say 'Sabine', laying any odds,)
Well, Sabine or Tiburtine be you,
I was extremely glad to see you,
'Mid town and country, and shake off
A well-deserved, stomachic cough
That hunting lordly meals I'd caught.
For, asked to dine with Sestius,
I read his speech on Antius,
With pestilence and poison fraught;
Whereon a chill and shattering cough
Beset me, till I drove it off
In your retreat, with bed and broth.
So, now revived, I thank you much
For lenience to that fault of mine;
But, if again I ever touch
His evil works, I won't be loath
If chill and coughing lay their clutch
On him, not me, who bids me dine
Just as I've read a book malign.

(xliv. tr. Marris.)

This 'Spring Song' was written during Catullus's stay in Asia Minor:

NOW Spring restores the balmy days,
And Zephyr's gentle air allays
The rage of equinoctial weather:
Catullus, leave the Phrygian downs

And hot Nicaea's fertile loam,
And fly to Asia's famous towns:
My heart is all agog to roam;
My eager feet are glad and strong;
Good-bye, my comrades, gallant throng,
Who, starting from far homes together,
By divers roads are turning home.

(xlvi. tr. Marris.)

His affectionate nature found expression in these lines to Calvus on the death of his wife Quintilia:

IF the dumb grave, my Calvus, can receive
Aught that is dear or grateful from our grief,
The pangs wherewith our old loves we recall,
And weep for friendships perished once for all,
Less must Quintilia feel the sorrow of
Her early death, than pleasure in your love.

(xcvi. tr. Marris.)

and again in his lament over his brother's grave:

BY many lands and over many a wave
I come, my brother, to your piteous grave,
To bring you the last offering in death
And o'er dumb dust expend an idle breath;
For fate has torn your living self from me,
And snatched you, brother, O, how cruelly!
Yet take these gifts, brought as our fathers bade
For sorrow's tribute to the passing shade;
A brother's tears have wet them o'er and o'er;
And so, my brother, hail, and farewell evermore!

(ci. tr. Marris.)

Finally we will take the little poem written to Cornificius, which 'reads like a swan-dirge from his death-bed': [1]

[1] From Professor Wight Duff's stimulating appreciation in *A Literary History of Rome*, p. 318.

SICK, Cornificius, is thy friend,
Sick to the heart: and sees no end
Of wretched thoughts that gathering fast
Threaten to wear him out at last.

And yet you never come and bring,
Though 'twere the least and easiest thing,
A comfort in that talk of thine.
You vex me. This to love of mine?

Prithee a little talk, for ease,
Full as the tears of sad Simonides!

(xxxviii. tr. Leigh Hunt.)

QUINTUS HORATIUS FLACCUS (65–8 B. C.[1]) is the great representative of the age of Augustus in Lyric poetry. Though he lacks the glamour and passion of Catullus, his workmanship is superb; he handles intricate metres, designed to suit the light and flexible language of Greece, with such dexterity that the heavy, sonorous forms of the Latin tongue gain a musical grace and fluency which earlier Roman poets had rarely attained, save in inspired moments; he is a master of technique. Much more normal than Catullus in his outlook upon life, he combines the shrewd common sense of the 'average man' with a deeply rooted patriotism, inspired by the great work of national regeneration attempted and largely achieved by Augustus; he revels in good cheer and good company, but faces the ever-present prospect of Death with a philosophic equanimity which springs from a ripe experience and a well-balanced judgement. He can sing prettily enough of love, but avoids both the heights and depths of passion: the 'Golden Mean' is his guide in life.

The Odes are the work of his mature years, the first three books being published in 23, the fourth in 13 B. C. Already in his Epodes, published about 30 B. C., he had attempted occasional verse, but the experiment was hardly successful: Horace had not really found himself as yet. An extract from the 16th Epode, probably written before the final struggle between Antony and the future emperor Augustus, shows him in a mood of romantic

[1] See also pp. 166, 288 ff., 335 ff., 364 ff.

pessimism, counselling a general migration from Italy, ruined by civil wars, to the mythical Islands of the Blest:

US Ocean awaiteth, the girdler of earth: let us seek, on-sailing,
The fields of Paradise, the Islands of the Blest,
Where yearly the soil without tillage bestoweth the harvests unfailing,
Where blossoms aye the vine by pruner's knife undressed:
The olive-shoot burgeons, the husbandman's trust it betrayeth never:
Dark-emerald figs begem the trees ungrafted there:
Out of the holm-oak's hollow the gold of the comb drips ever:
With tinkling foot the rill leaps down its mountain stair.
There to the pails unbidden the milch-goats come in the gloaming:
For love the heifer comes full-uddered to the byre.
They hear not at even the growl of the bear round the sheep-fold roaming;
Nor earth with viper-nests swells up in hillocks dire:
. . . . . .
Hitherward rowed by her heroes never came Argo racing;
The shameless dame of Colchis[1] never trod its strand;
Never shipmen of Sidon came hither, their yards on the new tack bracing:
Ulysses' toil-worn crew ne'er touched at that blest land.
Jupiter veiled those shores, and reserved for a God-fearing nation,
When he with brass-alloy debased the Age of Gold—
With brass: but with iron yet harder his wrath made each generation:
The way to 'scape wherefrom my prophet-lips have told.

(*Epode* xvi. tr. A. S. Way.)

In the Odes, Horace sings in a more hopeful strain: peace had now been restored, and Horace, secure in the patronage of Maecenas, is almost in the position of a court poet: he feels it his mission to further Augustus in his work of restoring good

[1] Medea.

government and sound morality, and without undue servility he becomes the ally of the Emperor, in a series of patriotic odes which dwell on the past greatness and future destiny of Rome.

Here he is celebrating the triumph over Cleopatra, which heralded the dawn of the new era:

THE hour has come to fill the cups with wine,
With freely dancing feet the ground to tread,
The tables of the gods with feasts to spread,
In sumptuous Salian [1] manner, comrades mine.
To make our ancient Caecuban [2] descend
Out of its bin had been a deed of ill,
While a demented queen was plotting still
Our State's destruction and our Empire's end
With creatures full of shamelessness and shame,
A crew contaminate; for she was crazed
With hopes extravagantly wild, and dazed
With Fortune's favour; but her ships aflame,
With scarce one saved, soon brought her fury low,
And Caesar changed the fond illusions, bred
Of Mareotic [3] wine, to sober dread,
When in pursuit he bade his galleys row,
To put the deadly monster into chains;
From Italy he chased her, following like
A hawk that swoops, the timid dove to strike,
Or a swift hunter on the snowy plains,
Tracking the hare in Thessaly. But she,
Seeking a nobler death, and not afraid,
With woman's terror, of a dagger's blade,
Nor seeking hidden shores, where she might flee,
With unblenched countenance, and dauntless, saw
Her ruined palace, and could even clasp
In her courageous hand the deadly asp,
All its black venom to her blood to draw,

[1] i. e. like the Salii, the dancing priests of Mars.
[2] A famous Italian wine.
[3] sc. Egyptian.

By bravely facing death, the braver grown;
No weakling woman, she refused with scorn
In loathed Liburnian galleys to be borne,
And, Queen discrowned, in splendid triumph shown.

(*Odes* i, 37, tr. F. Coutts.)

There are still moments of pessimism: the wealth and luxury of modern times contrast unfavourably with the 'good old days':

FEW roods of ground the piles we raise
Will leave to plough; ponds wider spread
Than Lucrine lake will meet the gaze
On every side; the plane unwed[1]
Will top the elm; the violet-bed,
The myrtle, each delicious sweet,
On olive-grounds their scent will shed,
Where once were fruit-trees yielding meat;
Thick bays will screen the midday range
Of fiercest suns. Not such the rule
Of Romulus and Cato sage,
And all the bearded, good old school.
Each Roman's wealth was little worth,
His country's much; no colonnade
For private pleasance wooed the North
With cool 'prolixity of shade'.
None might the casual sod disdain
To roof his home; a town alone,
At public charge, a sacred fane
Were honour'd with the pomp of stone.

(*Odes* ii, 15, tr. J. Conington.)

The Third Book opens with six magnificent imperial odes, written to glorify the new régime inaugurated by Augustus in 27 B. C. Of these, the second refers to the reorganization of the Roman army, and instructs the rising generation in their duty to the State: the fifth is probably a defence of Augustus's policy in abandoning, for the time, the Roman prisoners and standards

[1] Elm-trees were used to support vines: plane-trees were not, and so might be called 'unwed'.

captured by the Parthians from Crassus at the battle of Carrhae in 53 B. C.: it introduces the story of Regulus, who dissuaded the Senate from ransoming the Roman prisoners taken by Carthage, and returned himself to captivity.

TO suffer hardness with good cheer,
In sternest school of warfare bred,
Our youth should learn; let steed and spear
Make him one day the Parthian's dread;
Cold skies, keen perils, brace his life.
Methinks I see from rampired town
Some battling tyrant's matron wife,
Some maiden, look in terror down,—
'Ah, my dear lord, untrain'd in war!
O tempt not the infuriate mood
Of that fell lion! See! from far
He plunges through a tide of blood!'
What joy, for fatherland to die!
Death catches e'en the man that flees,
Nor spares a recreant chivalry,
Their coward backs, their trembling knees.
True Virtue never knows defeat:
Her robes she keeps unsullied still,
Nor takes, nor quits, *her* curule seat
To please a people's veering will.
True Virtue opens heaven to worth:
She makes the way she does not find:
The vulgar crowd, the humid earth,
Her soaring pinion leaves behind.

(*Odes* iii, 2 (1–24), tr. J. Conington.)

JOVE rules in heaven, his thunder shows;
Henceforth Augustus earth shall own
Her present god, now Briton foes
And Persians bow before his throne.
Has Crassus' soldier ta'en to wife
A base barbarian, and grown grey

(Woe, for a nation's tainted life!)
Earning his foemen-kinsmen's pay,
His king, forsooth, a Mede, his sire
A Marsian? can he name forget,
Gown, sacred shield, undying fire,
And Jove and Rome are standing yet?
'Twas this that Regulus foresaw,
What time he spurn'd the foul disgrace
Of peace, whose precedent would draw
Destruction on an unborn race,
Unless the prisoner in his chains
Should die unpitied. 'I,' he said,
'Have seen our spoils in Punic fanes,
And armour, ne'er a blood-drop shed,
Stripp'd from the soldier; I have seen
Free sons of Rome with arms fast tied;
The fields we spoil'd with corn are green,
And Carthage opes her portals wide.
The warrior, sure, redeem'd by gold,
Will fight the bolder! Aye, you heap
On baseness loss. The hues of old
Revisit not the wool we steep;
And genuine worth, expell'd by fear,
Returns not to the worthless slave.
Break but her meshes, will the deer
Assail you? then will he be brave
Who once to faithless foes has knelt;
Yes, Carthage yet his spear will fly,
Who with bound arms the cord has felt,
The coward, and has fear'd to die.
He knows not, he, how life is won;
Thinks war, like peace, a thing of trade!
Great art thou, Carthage! mate the sun
While Italy in dust is laid!'
His wife's pure kiss he waved aside,

And prattling boys, as one disgraced,
They tell us, and with manly pride
Stern on the ground his visage placed.
With counsel thus ne'er else aread
He nerved the fathers' weak intent,
And, girt by friends that mourned him, sped
Into illustrious banishment.
Well witting what the torturer's art
Design'd him, with like unconcern
The press of kin he push'd apart
And crowds encumbering his return,
As though, some tedious business o'er
Of client's court, his journey lay
Towards Venafrum's glassy shore
Or Sparta-built Tarentum's bay.

(*Odes* iii, 5, tr. J. Conington.)

The work of Augustus is summed up in this Ode from the Fourth Book, written at a time when civil strife and anarchy were already things of the past:

OF battles fought I fain had told,
And conquer'd towns, when Phoebus smote
His harp-string: 'Sooth, 'twere over-bold
To tempt wide seas in that frail boat.'
Thy age, great Caesar, has restored
To squalid fields the plenteous grain,
Given back to Rome's almighty Lord
Our standards, torn from Parthian fane,
Has closed Quirinian Janus' gate,[1]
Wild passion's erring walk controll'd,
Heal'd the foul plague-spot of the state,
And brought again the life of old,
Life, by whose healthful power increased
The glorious name of Latium spread
To where our sun illumes the east
From where he seeks his western bed.

[1] 'Janus' gate' was closed only in time of peace.

While Caesar rules, no civil strife
  Shall break our rest, nor violence rude,
Nor rage, that whets the slaughtering knife
  And plunges wretched towns in feud.
The sons of Danube shall not scorn
  The Julian edicts; no, nor they
By Tanais' distant river born,
  Nor Persia, Scythia, or Cathay.
And we on feast and working-tide,
  While Bacchus' bounties freely flow,
Our wives and children at our side,
  First paying Heaven the prayers we owe,
Shall sing of chiefs whose deeds are done.
  As wont our sires, to flute or shell,
And Troy, Anchises, and the son
  Of Venus on our tongues shall dwell.

(*Odes* iv, 15, tr. J. Conington.)

Horace's genial philosophy of Life and Death may be illustrated by the following six odes:

SEE, deep in glistening snow Soracte stands;
No more the straining woods their load uphold,
The streams are frozen with the piercing cold;
Pile on the hearth the chill-dispersing brands,
Pour out the Sabine wine, four winters old.

Leave to the gods all else; when they allay
The winds that battle on the seething seas,
The ancient ashes and the cypress trees
Will shake no longer; count as gain each day
That Fortune grants; but never think to tease

Its secret from to-morrow. Now, ere yet
Morose old age thy bloom of beauty stain,
Sweet love and dances thou must not disdain,
Nor shun the places where most oft are met
Whispers of tenderness, when night again

View from the top of Mount Soracte looking towards S. Oreste

Photograph by Mr. R. Gardner

Brings back the trysting hour, and laughs betray
The merry maid in some far corner hid,
Whose ring or bracelet has been snatched, in play
Which she invites, while feigning to forbid.

(*Odes* i, 9, tr. F. Coutts.)

NO need of Moorish archer's craft
To guard the pure and stainless liver;
He wants not, Fuscus, poison'd shaft
To store his quiver,
Whether he traverse Libyan shoals,
Or Caucasus, forlorn and horrent,
Or lands where far Hydaspes rolls
His fabled torrent.
A wolf, while roaming trouble-free
In Sabine wood, as fancy led me,
Unarm'd I sang my Lalage,
Beheld, and fled me.
Dire monster! in her broad oak woods
Fierce Daunia fosters none such other,
Nor Juba's land, of lion broods
The thirsty mother.
Place me where on the ice-bound plain
No tree is cheer'd by summer breezes,
Where Jove descends in sleety rain
Or sullen freezes;
Place me where none can live for heat,
'Neath Phoebus' very chariot plant me,
That smile so sweet, that voice so sweet,
Shall still enchant me.

(*Odes* i, 22, tr. J. Conington.)

AN equal mind, when storms o'ercloud,
Maintain, nor 'neath a brighter sky
Let pleasure make your heart too proud,
O Dellius, Dellius! sure to die,

Whether in gloom you spend each year,
Or through long holydays at ease
In grassy nook your spirit cheer
With old Falernian vintages,
Where poplar pale and pine-tree high
Their hospitable shadows spread
Entwined, and panting waters try
To hurry down their zigzag bed.
Bring wine and scents, and roses' bloom,
Too brief, alas! to that sweet place,
While life, and fortune, and the loom
Of the Three Sisters yield you grace.
Soon must you leave the woods you buy,
Your villa, wash'd by Tiber's flow,
Leave,—and your treasures heap'd so high
Your reckless heir will level low.
Whether from Argos' founder born
In wealth you lived beneath the sun,
Or nursed in beggary and scorn,
You fall to Death, who pities none.
One way all travel; the dark urn
Shakes each man's lot, that soon or late
Will force him, hopeless of return,
On board the exile-ship of Fate.

(*Odes* ii, 3, tr. J. Conington.)

LICINIUS, trust a seaman's lore:
Steer not too boldly to the deep,
Nor, fearing storms, by treacherous shore
Too closely creep.

Who makes the golden mean his guide
Shuns miser's cabin, foul and dark,
Shuns gilded roofs, where pomp and pride
Are envy's mark.

With fiercer blasts the pine's dim height
Is rock'd; proud towers with heavier fall
Crash to the ground; and thunders smite
The mountains tall.

In sadness hope, in gladness fear
'Gainst coming change will fortify
Your breast. The storms that Jupiter
Sweeps o'er the sky

He chases. Why should rain to-day
Bring rain to-morrow? Python's foe[1]
Is pleased sometimes his lyre to play,
Nor bends his bow.

Be brave in trouble; meet distress
With dauntless front; but when the gale
Too prosperous blows, be wise no less,
And shorten sail.

(*Odes* ii, 10, tr. J. Conington.)

POSTUMUS, Postumus, alack-a-day,
The years, how swiftly do they glide away!
No piety keeps wrinkles from the brow,
Nor makes old age his near approach delay,
Nor never-mastered Death more time allow;

If thou should'st sacrifice three hundred steers
Each morning, friend, 'twere futile hope to storm
The heart of Pluto[2], never touched to tears,
Who prisons Geryon, of triple form,

And Tityus, beyond the gloomy tide
That all whom bounties of the Earth sustain
Must cross, who e'er they be; the Prince beside
The needy husbandman; because in vain

[1] Apollo.

[2] The king of the lower world.

Shall we keep safe from Mars' ensanguined field,
Or the hoarse Adriatic's surging death,
Or, as the autumn threatens, seek a shield
Against the touch of Auster's baleful breath;

We shall behold Cocytus[1], all the same,
That black and tortuous flows, with sullen coil,
And Danaus' progeny[2], of evil fame,
And Sisyphus, condemned to ceaseless toil.

Earth must thou leave, thy home and charming wife,
Nor, though thou tendest many, shall one tree,
Of all that thou didst own in this brief life,
Except the hateful cypress, follow thee;

A worthier heir that Caecuban of thine,
Which thou behind a hundred locks dost hoard,
Shall drink, and splash the floor with lordly wine,
More choice than decks a Pontiff's festal board.

(*Odes* ii, 14, tr. F. Coutts.)

THE snow is fled: the trees their leaves put on,
The fields their green:
Earth owns the change, and rivers lessening run
Their banks between.
Naked the Nymphs and Graces in the meads
The dance essay:
'No 'scaping death' proclaims the year, that speeds
This sweet spring day.
Frosts yield to zephyrs; Summer drives out Spring,
To vanish, when
Rich Autumn sheds his fruits; round wheels the ring,—
Winter again!
Yet the swift moons repair Heaven's detriment:
We, soon as thrust

[1] A river in the lower world.
[2] The Danaids, who slew their suitors.

'Earth must thou leave.' The same note of Roman depression on a Mosaic in Rome

Where good Aeneas, Tullus, Ancus[1] went,
What are we? dust.
Can Hope assure you one day more to live
From powers above?
You rescue from your heir whate'er you give
The self you love.
When life is o'er and Minos[2] has rehearsed
The grand last doom,
Not birth, nor eloquence, nor worth, shall burst
Torquatus' tomb.
Not Dian's self can chaste Hippolytus
To life recall,
Nor Theseus free his loved Pirithous
From Lethe's thrall.

(*Odes* iv, 7, tr. J. Conington.)

In lighter mood are the following:

WHAT slender youth, bedew'd with liquid odours,
Courts thee on roses in some pleasant cave,
Pyrrha? For whom bind'st thou
In wreaths thy golden hair,
Plain in thy neatness? O how oft shall he
On faith and changed gods complain, and seas
Rough with black winds, and storms
Unwonted shall admire!
Who now enjoys thee credulous, all gold,
Who always vacant, always amiable,
Hopes thee, of flattering gales
Unmindful. Hapless they
T' whom thou untried seem'st fair. Me in my vow'd
Picture the sacred wall declares to have hung
My dank and dripping weeds
To the stern God of sea.

(*Odes* i, 5, tr. Milton.)

[1] Tullus and Ancus were early kings of Rome.
[2] Judge in the lower world.

ALL Persian ostentation, boy, I hate;
In garlands woven with bast I see no grace;
Leave off this eager search from place to place,
To find where roses linger late.

See to it and take heed no flowers to twine
With the plain myrtle; myrtle well befits
The servant, and the master, as he sits
Quaffing beneath the trellised vine.

(*Odes* i, 38, tr. F. Coutts.)

This version, by Herrick, shows how much the English poet owes, both in spirit and in style, to Horace:

Hor. WHILE, Lydia, I was lov'd of thee,
Nor any was preferr'd 'fore me
To hug thy whitest neck: than I,
The Persian King liv'd not more happily.

Lyd. While thou no other didst affect,
Nor Cloe was of more respect;
Then Lydia, far-fam'd Lydia,
I flourish't more than Roman Ilia.

Hor. Now Thracian Cloe governs me,
Skilfull i' th' Harpe, and Melodie:
For whose affection, Lydia, I
(So Fate spares her) am well content to die.

Lyd. My heart now set on fire is
By Ornithes sonne, young Calais;
For whose commutuall flames here I
(To save his life) twice am content to die.

Hor. Say our first loves we sho'd revoke,
And sever'd, joyne in brazen yoke:
Admit I Cloe put away,
And love again love-cast-off Lydia?

Lyd. Though mine be brighter than the Star;
Thou lighter than the Cork by far;
Rough as th' Adratick sea, yet I
Will live with thee, or else for thee will die.

(iii, 9, tr. Herrick.)

BANDUSIA,[1] stainless mirror of the sky!
Thine is the flower-crowned bowl, for thee shall die,
When dawns yon sun, the kid
Whose horns, half-seen, half-hid,

Challenge to dalliance or to strife—in vain.
Soon must the firstling of the wild herd be slain,
And these cold springs of thine
With blood incarnadine.

Fierce glows the Dog-star, but his fiery beam
Toucheth not thee: still grateful thy cool stream
To labour-wearied ox,
Or wanderer from the flocks:

And henceforth thou shalt be a royal fountain:
My harp shall tell how from thy cavernous mountain,
Where the brown oak grows tallest,
All babblingly thou fallest.

(iii, 13, tr. C. S. Calverley.)

The last ode of the Third Book forms a fitting close to this selection: at the time when it was written, Horace probably felt that he had finished his work as a Lyric poet; the Fourth Book was written after a considerable interval, mainly with the object of celebrating the victories of Augustus and his family. The claim that he is the first poet to

mate
To lyre of Latium Aeolic lay

is not strictly true, but it is in part justified by the fact that in the variety of his metres Horace far surpassed any preceding Roman poet.

[1] A fountain near the birthplace of Horace, in Apulia (S. Italy).

NOW have I made my monument: and now
Nor brass shall longer live, nor loftier raise
The royallest pyramid its superb brow.
Nor ruin of rain or wind shall mar its praise,
Nor tooth of Time, nor pitiless pageantry
O' the flying years. In death I shall not die
Wholly, nor Death's dark Angel all I am
Make his; but ever flowerlike my fame
Shall flourish in the foldings of the Mount
Capitoline, where the Priests go up, and mute
The maiden Priestesses.
From mean account
Lifted to mighty, where the resolute
Waters of Aufidus reverberant ring
O'er fields where Daunus once held rustic state,
Of barren acres simple-minded king,—
There was I born, and first of men did mate
To lyre of Latium Aeolic lay.
Clothe thee in glory, Muse, and grandly wear
Thy hardly-gotten greatness, and my hair
Circle, Melpomene, with Delphian bay.

(*Odes* iii, 30, tr. H. W. Garrod.)

Among the shorter poems which have been attributed to VIRGIL,[1] some, at any rate, are probably genuine; and it is worth while to quote one in which the poet, in the manner of Catullus, announces his intention of forsaking the study of rhetoric for the epicureanism of the philosopher Siro:

AVAUNT, ye vain bombastic crew,
Crickets that swill no Attic dew:
Good-bye, grammarians crass and narrow,
Selius, Tarquitius, and Varro:
A pedant tribe of fat-brained fools,
The tinkling cymbals of the schools!

[1] See pp. 22 ff., 112 ff., 131, 212 ff.

Sextus, my friend of friends, good-bye,
With all our pretty company!
I'm sailing for the blissful shore,
Great Siro's high recondite lore,
That haven where my life shall be
From every tyrant passion free.
You too, sweet Muses mine, farewell,
Sweet muses mine, for truth to tell
Sweet were ye once, but now begone;
And yet, and yet, return anon,
And when I write, at whiles be seen
In visits shy and far between.

(tr. Sir T. H. Warren.)

MARCUS VALERIUS MARTIALIS (?40–102 A. D.), like Lucan, the Senecas, and Quintilian, was a Spaniard by birth, though Rome was the scene of his poetical activity. He supported himself for thirty-four years mainly upon the sale of his epigrams, won the friendship of many men of eminence in letters or public life, and succeeded in gaining the favour of the Emperor Domitian, whom he flattered with amazing servility,[1] and other wealthy patrons. Thus he was frankly a professional poet and toady to the great, and wrote to please or amuse his contemporaries; though there is a satirical flavour about much of his work, he did not, like Juvenal, claim to be animated by any lofty moral purpose; he can show genuine feeling and pathos, and has an eye for the picturesque, but it is as a wit that he occupies the first place in Roman poetry. Modelling himself largely upon Catullus, he has a perfect command over language, a light but sure touch, a lucidity and point possessed by no other poet of what is called the Silver Age of Latin literature. If we seek for modern English parallels, we may perhaps find them in such poets as Prior, Praed, Calverley, or Austin Dobson. His subjects range over almost the whole of fashionable life: the streets, the theatres, the baths, the suburbs and surroundings of Rome—the hardships of 'hangers on', the wiles of legacy-hunters, the

[1] Always, however, with his tongue in his cheek, we suspect: under emperors like Nero and Domitian, flattery was an essential condition of success as a poet.

stinginess of rich hosts, the impudence of plagiarists—all the vices and follies of the day are described in a brilliant series of vignettes which give us a clear, often lurid, insight into the decadent civilization of Rome in the first century of the Empire.

It is impossible here to do justice to Martial's many-sided talents, but the following epigrams represent more than one aspect:

Stingy Readers

LUPERCUS, when we meet each day,
'May I not send my boy' you say,
'To fetch your Epigrams, and when
I've read, I'll send them back again?'
No need, Lupercus, to employ
On such a task your busy boy.
My house is far away: I sleep
Three storeys up: the stairs are steep.
You'll find the thing you want more near:
For the Book-quarter first you steer:
(To buy, of course, you're often here!)
To Caesar's Forum, there 's a shop
Just opposite, where, if you stop,
The posted names of bards you'll read:
To call the Owner there 's no need:
Just ask for *Martial*: he to you
Will soon be given, smooth-shaved and new,
And robed in gorgeous raiment blue.
A mere half-crown your Martial buys:
'What! half-a-crown!' Lupercus cries,
'No, no!'—Lupercus, you are wise.

(Book I, cxvii, tr. W. J. Courthope.)

The Libellous Poet

CINNA is said to libel me: who heeds?
He does not write, whose poems no man reads.

(III, ix, tr. W. J. Courthope.)

Epitaph on a Winning Jockey

SEE me, the jockey Scorpus, here undone!
At twenty-seven so many crowns I'd won,
The Fates, mistaking, reckoned them as years,
And to my life's brief thread applied their shears.

(X, liii, tr. W. J. Courthope.)

An Epithalamium

CLAUDIA with Pudens, Rufus, weds to-day:
Good luck bring Hymen to the twain, I pray!
Fine cinnamon with nard mates like our friends:
So Massic wine with Attic honey blends:
As rightly elms are joined to vines: no more
Lily loves water, myrtle loves the shore.
Dwell ever, Concord, by the marriage bed!
May Venus bless a pair so fitly wed!
Long love the wife her husband, and be told
By him, when aged, she seems never old!

(IV, xiii, tr. W. J. Courthope.)

The Happy Life

JULIUS, the things that make for ease
And happiness in life are these:
Lands left me, not acquired with toil;
Unfailing fuel; kindly soil;
No suits[1]; light work; mind void of whims;
Good constitution; healthy limbs;
Frank thoughts; plain board; congenial friends;
Meals that, with Plenty, Mirth attends;
Nights with good cheer, not drinking, sped;
A glad but not immodest bed;
Sound sleep that makes the darkness fly;
Content with life, if I be I,
Without the fear or wish to die.

(X, xlvii, tr. W. J. Courthope.)

[1] i.e. law-suits.

The Noises of Rome

WHY am I brought so oft, and by what charm,
To dry Nomentum and this humble farm?
For poor men, Sparsus, who would find a space
For sleep or thinking, Rome affords no place.
You claim to think; but all deny your right,
By morn schoolmasters, baker's men by night;
Armies of copper-smiths, a thousand strong,
Go hammer, hammer, hammer, all day long.
Your money-changers here, a lazy horde,
Rattle gold coins upon their dirty board;
There ponderous mallets, pounding Spanish rock
For lumps of gold, the midnight chamber shock.
Add to the noise Bellona's drunken crew,
The shipwrecked mariner, the begging Jew,
Ay, and blind beggars, selling matches, too!
He who can tell how many clamours keep
The weary Roman from his noonday sleep
Can count the brazen instruments as soon
Of those who beat their gongs to help the Moon.[1]
You, Sparsus, of these plagues can nothing tell,
Who, far-removed, in dainty villa dwell,
And on the slumbering hills look down at home,
To see your farm and vineyards both in Rome.
Your grapes are large as what Falernum stores;
Your house so spacious you may drive indoors;
No noise breaks in upon your sleep at night;
By day naught wakes you but admitted light.
For me the laughter of the passing crowd,
All Rome beneath my bedroom, shrill and loud,
Disgust me with some ever fresh alarm:
Hence, when I wish to sleep, I seek this farm.

(XII, lvii, tr. W. J. Courthope.)

[1] When eclipsed.

'And on the slumbering hills look down at home.' View at Tivoli where Horace is said to have had a villa

Hermogenes

HERMOGENES steals napery with all the skill and zest
That Massa showed in plundering a safe or money-chest.
For watch his right hand as you may and firmly grasp his left,
He'll find some means, despite your care, to carry out his theft.
As stags are said to swallow snakes, as rainbows in the skies
Draw water imperceptibly, so he secures his prize.
When Myrinus,[1] though beaten, roused the house's sympathies,
Four waving kerchiefs vanished, pilfered by Hermogenes.
When the Praetor at the races raised the snow-white starting flag,
Before 'twas dropped, Hermogenes had added to his bag.
If no one brought his napkin, for fear of robberies,
The cloth from off the table Hermogenes would seize,
And, should this be discarded, the valances and slips
From the table-legs and couches the crafty rascal strips.
Though summer suns are blazing sore, the theatre lessees
Draw back the awnings quickly when appears Hermogenes.
The sailors clew their sails up tight and fear to court the breeze
When down the quay the pirate strides—the bold Hermogenes.
Straightway the surpliced, tonsured priest[2] his mummery quits and flees
When mingled with the worshippers there stands Hermogenes.
When going to festivities all napery he'll spurn,
But never empty-handed does Hermogenes return.

(XII, xxix, tr. S. Bell.)

STATIUS[3], though chiefly famous among his contemporaries (at the end of the first century A. D.) as an epic poet, deserves to be remembered also for the beautiful address to sleep which is found among his occasional pieces, the 'Silvae':

[1] A popular gladiator.
[2] The priest of the Egyptian goddess Isis.
[3] See pp. 58 ff.

WHAT sin was mine, sweet, silent boy-god, Sleep,
Or what, poor sufferer, have I left undone,
That I should lack thy guerdon, I alone?
Quiet are the brawling streams: the shuddering deep
Sinks, and the rounded mountains feign to sleep.
The high seas slumber pillowed on Earth's breast;
All flocks and birds and beasts are stilled in rest,
But my sad eyes their nightly vigil keep.
O! if beneath the night some happier swain,
Entwined in loving arms, refuse thy boon
In wanton happiness,—come hither soon,
Come hither, Sleep. Let happier mortals gain
The full embrace of thy soft angel wing:
But touch me with thy wand, or hovering
Above mine eyelids sweep me with thy train.

(*Silv.* v. 4, tr. W. H. Fyfe.)

DIDACTIC POETRY

POETRY has in most languages been used from time to time as the vehicle of definite teaching. In English we have comparatively few examples, dealing mostly with morals rather than science, and belonging almost exclusively to the eighteenth century; Pope's *Essay on Man* is the most conspicuous of these. In antiquity the practice was more general, probably for two reasons. In the first place, before writing became general the maxims which men wished to remember would be couched in verse, which is more easily kept in mind than prose, so that it was not unnatural for an instructive treatise to be written in verse too. In the second place all poets in Greece and Rome regarded themselves much more definitely as instructors than they do nowadays. Thus in Aristophanes' comedy *The Frogs* the two tragic poets Aeschylus and Euripides engage in a contest in the lower world as to which of them was the greater poet when alive, and both alike claim to have taught the people of Athens for their good. So too the Roman drama, both tragedy and comedy, was full of brief moral maxims which would stay in men's minds and become household words, and indeed collections of such maxims from the poets were made.

In Greece the earliest poetry we possess after Homer is didactic, the work of a Boeotian poet Hesiod (*circ.* 800 B. C.). He wrote a *Theogony*, which did much to fix the floating ideas about the gods and their characters and their relations to one another, but more important for our purpose, because it served as a model to Virgil, was a poem called *The Works and Days*, in which he gives instructions to a farmer brother as to the working of his farm.

In the fifth century didactic poetry was turned to a new use when two philosophers used verse as the medium for expounding their theories of the nature of the world. Parmenides of Elea (*circ.* 500 B. C.) had no direct effect on Latin writers, but for Empedocles of Agrigentum (*circ.* 450 B. C.), who held that the world was composed of the four 'elements', earth, air, fire, and water, Lucretius expresses the greatest admiration (i. 716–34), and it is clear that he took Empedocles' poem *On Nature* as his own model.

During the great era of Athenian literature didactic poetry is

missing and we do not find it again till the Alexandrian age. There, in the great Hellenistic city on the Egyptian coast, Greek literature had a revival (see *The Pageant of Greece*, xiii), and, as that revival was largely based on learning, it is not surprising that didactic poetry should come to its own again. Natural history was represented by Nicander, who wrote among other things a poem no longer extant on *Bee-keeping*, which is thought to have been Virgil's model in the fourth *Georgic*. Astronomy again was much in vogue at Alexandria, and the two poets Aratus and Eratosthenes supplied Virgil with some of his astronomical lore, and also with certain passages on signs of the weather and on lucky and unlucky days for agricultural work—for astronomy was already degenerating into astrology, the 'science' of deducing man's fortunes from the position of the stars. It was a rather dreary theme, but for some reason it made, as we shall see, a special appeal to Roman writers. Yet another branch of learning which produced didactic poetry in Alexandria was archaeology. The learned poet Callimachus, who was librarian of the great library, produced a poem on *Origins*, an antiquary's poem, which is interesting to us, because it was Ovid's model when he came to write on the Roman religious calendar.

In Rome it is clear that from early times verse was used as a means of committing short and pithy sayings to memory, and as far back as the fourth century B. C. aphorisms of this kind in the rough native Italian metre known as 'Saturnian' are attributed to the Censor, APPIUS CLAUDIUS CAECUS (*circ.* 312 B. C.). A few have been preserved to us, such as,

'Every man must forge his own fortune,'
'When you see a friend, forget your sorrows.'

But there is no evidence of consecutive didactic verse till the tragedian Accius (*circ.* 135 B. C.[1]) wrote a sort of history of Latin poetry which he named 'Instructions' (*Didascalica*), and his example was followed in the next century by Volcatius Sedigitus[2], whose strange verses, in which he arranged the Roman comedians in order of merit, have been preserved to us, and Porcius Licinus[3], of whom we have left a rather embittered comment on Terence and his relations with Scipio. These works, however, belong rather to the province of literary criticism.

In the second half of the last century B. C., the time of the great internal struggles which led to the overthrow of the Roman

[1] See p. 178 ff. [2] See p. 356. [3] See p. 355.

Republic and the establishment of the Empire, a passion for the Greek literature of Alexandria swept over Rome, and the young poets of the day occupied themselves in reproducing Alexandrian works in Latin with all their learning and conceits and obscurities. The great orator, MARCUS TULLIUS CICERO[1], though in later life he poured scorn on these 'modernists', was in his earlier years attracted by the movement and laboriously translated the *Phenomena* of Aratus, a tiresome work on astronomy. In order to show what these early efforts were like and to emphasize the contrast between these first beginnings of Latin didactic poetry and what it afterwards became, we may translate a short extract from the four or five hundred lines of Cicero's poem which survive: the poem has a further interest for us in that Lucretius evidently had some admiration for it and introduced occasional phrases and words from Cicero into his own much greater work. The 'poet' is describing the constellations in turn and has reached the winged horse, Pegasus.

AS he moves on, swift Pegasus is touched
By the bright Fishes, and Aquarius
Pats his soft neck. Nor does the mighty Horse
Visit the western sky till Capricorn
Breathes stiffening cold from out his shaggy breast,
Half-man, half-beast, set on the sun's high course;
Whom when he touches with undying rays,
Phoebus in winter turns about his car.
Beware this month to venture on the sea:
Short is the daylight then for ocean voyage,
In no swift round moves on the winter night.
Tardily then in answer to thy prayers
Will dawn return to usher in the sun.
With furious blows the winds will lash the waves
And shivering cold will shake thy frozen limbs.
Yet all the while the years are rolling on,
No stars delay their course, no blasts they shun,
Nor fear the foam-flecked waters' threatening roar.

(*Aratea* 55–71.)

[1] See pp. 304 ff., 357 f., 444 ff., 466 ff., 492 ff.

This is probably the most imaginative passage in what remains to us of Cicero's poem, but it is poor work, and does not suggest any great future for didactic poetry in Latin. Nor can more be made of the remains of his translation of another poem of Aratus, the *Prognostics* or *Weather-signs*, or of his brother's poem on the signs of the Zodiac.

Yet while these second-rate verses were being produced in quantities, the greatest didactic poem in the language was being written. Titus Lucretius Carus was a young aristocrat, born probably in 98 B. C., who seems to have been intimate with the leading politicians and thinkers of his day, and might well have taken to a normal political career and been involved in all the constitutional struggles of the middle of the last century B. C. But he became a passionate Epicurean and devoted himself to the writing of a great poem in which he appealed primarily to his friend Caius Memmius, and through him to his contemporaries in general, to study and accept the philosophy of Epicurus as the only hope of salvation. Men's minds, he felt even more strongly than his master, were swayed by superstitious terror on the one hand of the arbitrary action of the gods towards men in this life, and on the other of the punishment of the soul after death. These terrors held men in a constant agony of dread and drove them to commit every kind of crime, and they could only be dispelled if it were shown firstly that the world was governed by the action of natural laws with which there was no divine interference, and secondly that at death the soul perished with the body. For this purpose Epicurus had expounded a purely materialist view of the world, derived from the Greek Atomists, Leucippus (*circ.* 440 B.C.) and Democritus (*circ.* 430 B. C.), according to which the only constituents of the universe were atoms, that is matter existing in minute particles, and empty space ; the soul, like the body, was an atomic compound which was dissolved at death. This system Lucretius expounded in great detail in the six books of his poem *On the Nature of Things*, enriching the dry and crabbed philosophy of Epicurus with a wealth of illustration from nature and a high poetic gift which has made posterity regard him primarily as a poet rather than a philosopher.

It is difficult in short extracts to give a satisfactory idea of a poem which is a logical whole, the argument being developed step by step with something of the regularity of the books and propositions of Euclid, but it is possible to show how by his observation, his imagination, and his great power of description

Lucretius turned hard thinking into poetry and so showed what didactic poetry at its best might be. There have been a good many translations of Lucretius into English verse, and though (since accuracy is important to give a notion of his close reasoning) we shall quote most frequently from the modern versions of Sir R. Allison and Mr. W. E. Leonard, a few citations from older translators will perhaps give a modern reader an idea of the rather old-world manner in which Lucretius wrote.

In the first two books Lucretius lays down the fundamental principles of the atomic system, the existence of atoms and space, the infinity of both, the character of the atoms, their qualities and motions and the ways in which they combine to form things. The First Book opens after the manner of an orthodox epic poem with an address to Venus, but Venus to Lucretius is not the heathen goddess of legend, but a personification of the great creative force of nature, which produces and sustains all things. We may quote here from the seventeenth-century version of Evelyn, the famous diarist, who wrote a verse translation of Book I.

ROMES Parent *Venus*, joy of Gods above
And *Men*, who under those bright signs that move
In heaven, dost all comfort bring and mirth
To the ship-bearing Seas, Corn-bearing Earth ;
By thee conceiv'd since all things living be
Beholding the Suns light, the Winds do flee
O *Goddess*, and the clouds which skies benight
Are dissipated, when thou com'st in sight.
Smooth seas and heavens smile ; under thy feet
Th'inamel'd earth doth her sweet flowers submit ;
For when the *Spring's* return brings the clear day
And *Genial West* with kindely gales doth play,
First aery birds, whose brest thy powr doth touch,
Chant forth (*ô Goddess*) thee & thine approach.
Then savage Bruits jump ore the flowry meads,
Or take the streams, where ere thy beauty leads,
Each Creature doth with eager passion goe ;
Lastly, through Seas, and Hills, where Rivers flow
With rapid course ; or where the Birds do build

Their leafie roosts, and through the verdant field
Soft flames thou dost in every breast infuse ;
So a fresh Off-spring still the Age renews.
Since then ore *Nature* thou sole *Queen* dost reign,
Nor ought without thee may the light attain,
Or can be frolick, or be pleasant made ;
Assist these studious *numbers* with thine ayde,
While I essay of *Natures works* to tell
For honor'd *Memmius*, who doth most excell,
By thee accomplisht ; Goddess, O bestow
Eternal grace on what from me shall flow,
That whilst I write, by Seas and land may cease
Fierce *Wars* clos'd in an everlasting *peace*.

(i. 1–30, tr. J. Evelyn.)

This is an example of Lucretius's freer manner, where the poet is not hampered by the difficulties of his philosophic thought. We may take another passage from the First Book of a more closely argumentative character, though in it too it is easy to see the poet's hand enlivening and enriching the theoretical discussion with beautiful illustrations and imaginative touches of language. Lucretius is arguing that we need not wonder because the atoms, the material of all creation, are unseen ; there are other bodies which we cannot see, whose effects we can yet realize, such as wind. We will quote this time from the vigorous modern rendering of Sir R. Allison.

AND now since I have taught that nothing comes
From nothing, and once born can ne'er return
To naught again, yet lest you should begin
To doubt my words, because you nothing see
Of these first elements, know there are things
Which must exist, and yet are never seen.
First then the tempest's force beats on the shores
And wrecks the mighty ships, and drives the clouds,
While passing o'er the plains with hurried force
It strews its course with mighty trees, and strikes
The topmost mountains blows that shake the woods,

So fiercely roars, with threatening voice, the storm.
There are then, it would seem, these viewless winds,
Endowed with bodies which you cannot see,
Which sweep along the earth, the sea, the sky,
And vex with sudden whirlwinds, nor do they
Stream on and scatter havoc otherwise
Than as the gentle force of water, when
With sudden stream, augmented from the hills
By heavy rains, it rushes from above
Hurling the forest's wrack and mighty trees :
Nor can the strong-built bridges ev'n endure
Its sudden onset, driven by the floods
The river rushes on the piles with all
Its strength, spreads ruin with a roar,
Displaces mighty stones, and sweeps away
Whatever may impede its onward rush.
Just so then must the blasts of wind advance,
And when like some strong stream they have been borne
In one direction, they sweep all away
And ruin all around with frequent storms,
Or sometimes catch things up with eddying whirls
And bear them off with swirling hurricanes.
Wherefore once more there are, be sure, these winds
Whose forms you cannot see, which emulate
In deeds and ways the mighty river's force,
All visible enough. (i. 265–97, tr. Allison.)

Note the subtlety of the comparison within the comparison. The action of the atoms is illustrated by that of the wind, which in its turn is compared to that of a rushing stream.

In the Second Book the poet deals with the motions of the atoms and their combinations with greater or lesser intervals of space to form things, and finally shows that the atoms themselves possess none of the 'secondary qualities' of colour, taste, sound, and smell, nor the capacity of sensation, but that all these are produced in compounds by the combination of particular atoms with particular motions in particular arrangements. This leads up to the

argument of the Third Book in which he shows that the soul too owes its sensations to its atomic constitution and that it loses it at death. Consider first a wonderful passage in which he illustrates the constant motion of the atoms in space by the movement of motes in a sunbeam, and concludes by pointing out that these motes are after all the smallest atomic compounds which we can perceive in motion and therefore actually nearest to the atoms.

LOOK where the sun
Through some dark corner pours his brightest beams,
A thousand little bodies you will see
Mix in the rays, and there for ever fight
Arrayed in mimic troops, no pause they give
But meet and part again, nor ever cease.
From this you may conjecture of the germs
What 'tis for ever in the mighty void
To be tossed up and down. In some degree
Such small events may illustrate great things,
And give a clue to knowledge. So 'tis well
That you should note these bodies how they rush
In the sun's rays, because such rushes show
What secret hidden forces lie below.
For you will see that things are often driven
By unseen blows to change their course, and then
Driven back return now here, now there, again
On every side. And mark this, motions are
Due always to the primal germs themselves.
The germs move of themselves: the lesser ones,
Nearest the force of those from which they spring,
Are driven onward by their unseen blows
And stir up those that somewhat larger are.
Thus motion mounts up by degrees, and so
Reaches our senses, so that those same germs,
That in the sunlight we can see, are moved
As well, and yet we cannot see the blows
By which they are for ever tossed about.

(ii. 114–41, tr. Allison.)

The same subtlety of description and brilliant vividness of illustration is seen in a later passage where the poet is explaining, just as a modern man of science might, that in a body which as a whole is at rest the innumerable component atoms are yet in quick unceasing motion. The two pictures of the sheep on the hillside and the manœuvring army show the eye of the artist. In this passage we may take the translation of the seventeenth-century scholar, Thomas Creech.

BUT more, tis nothing strange that every Mass
Seems quiet and at rest, and keeps its place,
Tho every little part moves here, and there:
For since the *Principles* too subtle are
For sight, their motion too must disappear;
Nay Objects fit for Sense, which distant lie,
Conceal their motions too, and cheat our eye.
For often on a Hill the *wanton* Sheep,
At distance plac'd, o're flowry Pastures creep
Where e're herbs crown'd with Pearly dew invite,
And kindly call their *eager* Appetite;
The Lambs, their bellies full, with various turns
Play o're the field, and try their tender Horns:
Yet all these seem confus'd at distance seen,
And like a *steddy White* spred o're the Green.
Besides, when two embattled Armies rage,
Throughout a spatious Plain, at last engage,
When all run here and there, the furious Horse
Beat o're the *trembling* Fields with nimble force,
Straight dreadful sparklings from the Arms appear,
And fill with a strange light the *wondring* Air;
Th' Earth groans beneath their feet, the Hills around,
Flattering the noise, restore the dreadful sound;
And yet 'twould seem, if from a Mountain shown,
A steddy Light, and a continued one.

(ii. 308–32, tr. Creech.)

By the end of Book II Lucretius has laid down the main principles of his system, and by the establishment of the universal action of the laws of nature has excluded the possibility of divine intervention. In Book III he proceeds to the other main problem, the nature of the soul. He first gives an account of the atomic structure of the soul, which is composed of elements of air, heat, and wind together with a nameless 'fourth substance', far more subtle than either of the other three, which is the source of sensation and thought, and is indeed 'the soul of the soul'. Then after a long section of argument in which he advances twenty-eight reasons for believing that the soul perishes at death, he bursts out into a strange and magnificent triumph-song on the soul's mortality, belief in which will free men from their fears of an after-life and so bring happiness in this life. We may illustrate the first and last of these sections. In the passage which follows he tells of the four elements in the soul, and then describes somewhat naïvely the effects of the predominance in the soul-compound of one or other of the elements.

THUS heat and air and the invisible wind
United make one nature, and that force
So nimble, which can move them like itself,
And is the cause of feeling to our frame.
This nature lurks within, is hidden away,
More than aught else, soul of our very soul,
Just as the force of mind and power of soul
Are latent in our body and our limbs,
Are formed of atoms few and small, so too
This nameless power, like-formed, is hidden away,
Soul of our very soul, o'er all supreme.
In like way wind and air and heat must grow
In union through our limbs: now one gives way
And now another leads, that so from all
A single whole be formed, lest heat and wind
And power of air acting apart destroy
All feeling, and disperse it far away
By their disunion. Yet still the mind
Has heat within it when it waxes wrath,

And passion glances from the flashing eyes.
There 's the cold breath of air that waits on fear,
Which makes our members shudder, thrills us through,
And there 's the light and gentle air, which goes
With mind at ease and cheerful countenance.
But more of heat they have whose passionate heart
And angry mind give way with ease to wrath.
First come the lions with terrific force,
Who with their roaring split their very heart,
Nor can contain their floods of rage within.
The chilly mind of stags has more of wind,
More quickly drives chill air throughout the limbs,
And makes their frame to tremble. While the ox
Lives rather on still air, nor does the flame,
The smoky flame of anger rouse it so,
Pouring dark shadows round, nor does it lie
Trembling, transfixed with the icy darts of fear :
It comes between the stags and savage lions.

(iii. 269–306, tr. Allison.)

To illustrate the triumph-song we may take a passage of striking imagination in which the poet supposes nature to rebuke men who are unwilling to depart from life and to face their death. We may quote again from Creech : he does not here keep very close to the Latin, but gives in vigorous verse the sense of the original.

BUT now if *Nature* should begin to speak,
And thus with loud *complaints* our *Folly* check ;
Fond *Mortal*, what 's the matter thou do'st *sigh* ?
Why all *these tears*, because thou once must die,
And once submit to *strong* Mortality ?
For if the *Race* thou hast already run
Was pleasant, if with *joy* thou saw'st the Sun ;
If all my *pleasures* did not pass thy mind
As thro a *Sieve*, but left some *Sweets* behind :
Why do'st thou not then like a *thankful* Guest
Rise chearfully from Life's *abundant* Feast,

And with a *quiet* mind go take thy *rest*?
But if all those Delights are lost and gone,
Spilt *idly* all, and Life a *burthen* grown;
Then why, fond *Mortal*, dost thou ask for more,
Why still desire t' increase thy *wretched* store,
And wish for what must waste like those before?
Not rather free thy self from pains, and fear,
And end thy *Life*, and *necessary* Care?
My *Pleasures* always in a *Circle* run,
The same *returning* with the *yearly* Sun:
And thus tho thou do'st still enjoy thy Prime,
And tho thy limbs feel not the rage of Time,
Yet I can find no *new*, no fresh delight;
The same *dull* Joys must vex thy Appetite,
Altho thou could'st prolong thy *wretched* breath
For *numerous* years, much more if *free* from Death.
What could we answer, what Excuses trust?
We must confess that her Reproofs are just.
But if a *Wretch*, if one *opprest* by Fate,
Mourns *coming* Death, and begs a *larger* Date,
Him *She* may *fiercely* chide: Forbear thy Sighs,
Thou *Wretch*, cease thy Complaints, and dry thine eyes.
If *Old*; Thou hast enjoy'd the *mighty* store
Of gay delights, and now canst taste no more;
But yet, because thou still did'st strive to meet
The *absent*, and contemnedst the *present* Sweet,
Death seems *unwelcom*, and thy race half run;
Thy course of life seems ended when begun;
And *unexpected* hasty Death destroys,
Before thy *greedy* mind is *full* of joys.
Yet leave these toys, that not befit thine Age,
New Actors now come on; *resign* the Stage.
If thus *she* chides, I think tis well enough,
I think tis nothing but a *just* reproof;
For *rising Beings* still the *old* pursue,

And take their place, *old* die, and frame the *new* :
But nothing sinks to *Hell*, and *sulphurous* flames,
The *Seeds* remain to make the future *frames* :
All which *shall* yield to Fate as *well* as thou,
And Things fell *heretofore* e'en just as *now*,
And *still* decaying things shall new produce ;
For Life's not given to possess, but use.

(iii. 931–71, tr. Creech.)

The first three books have thus achieved the main object which the poet had set before himself, but so great is his interest in the whole physical system of his master that he pursues its details through three more books, never, however, so losing himself in particulars that he does not see, and often pause to point out, their bearing on the fundamental theme. In Book IV he treats principally of the problems of sight and thought. In a purely materialistic system no effect can be produced except by contact, and this contact in vision and in thought is caused, he believes, by the effluence from things of ' images '—a kind of outer atomic skin—which flow off and striking the eye or the mind cause the sight of the object or thought about it. The theory seems crude to modern ideas, but Lucretius pursues it into all kinds of details and consequences. We may take first as an example of this conscientious work a passage describing how the reflexion is seen in the mirror and what it is that causes the appearance of distance. The passage is not as imaginative as some which we have chosen, but is a good example of the thoroughness with which the poet thinks out his problems.

NOW come, and why beyond a looking-glass
An image may be seen, perceive. For seen
It soothly is, removèd far within.
'Tis the same sort as objects peered upon
Outside in their true shape, whene'er a door
Yields through itself an open peering-place
And lets us see so many things outside
Beyond the house. Also that sight is made
By a twofold twin air : for first is seen
The air inside the door-posts ; next the doors,
The twain to left and right ; and afterwards

A light beyond comes brushing through our eyes,
Then other air, then objects peered upon
Outside in their true shape. And thus, when first
The image of the glass projects itself,
As to our gaze it comes, it shoves ahead
And drives along the air that 's in the space
Betwixt it and our eyes, and brings to pass
That we perceive the air ere yet the glass.
But when we've also seen the glass itself,
Forthwith that image which from us is borne
Reaches the glass, and there thrown back again
Comes back unto our eyes, and driving rolls
Ahead of itself another air, that then
'Tis this we see before itself, and thus
It looks so far removed behind the glass.

(iv. 269–88, tr. Leonard.)

An obvious objection to the trustworthiness of perception might be found in the occasional mistakes and illusions of sight to which we all appear to be subject, but Lucretius, following his master, argues that in such cases it is not the eye which is deceived, but the mind which makes false inferences from the data which sight gives it. The passage on such illusions is an almost equally good instance of Lucretius's sublety of argument, though through it all he never ceases to be a poet.

AND yet we don't admit the eyes in this
Are cheated. Their's it is to ever watch
Where light and shadow are : and if the lights
Are still the same, and if the shadow here
Is passing there, or if it rather be
Ev'n as we said before, the mind itself
Must still determine : 'tis not for the eyes
The nature of these things to understand.
Don't blame the eyes : the ship in which we sail
Seems to stand still though moving : that which lies
Fast at its mooring seems to pass us by.

The hills and plains, past which we drive our ship
And sail with canvas set, still seem to drop
Astern of us. The stars all seem to stand
Fixt in aetherial vaults, and yet we know
They move for ever, since they rise and set,
Revisiting the places where they rose,
With their bright bodies having measured out
The sky. So sun and moon appear to stand
Fixed in one place, although we know they move.
When mountains rise from out the middle gurge
Through which great fleets quite easily can pass,
They seem one island, so when children cease
Turning themselves around, the hall itself
Appears to turn, the pillars to whirl round,
So that they scarcely can believe, but that
The roof is threatening on their heads to fall.
Again, when nature raises first on high
The sun's red beams with trembling shoots of flame,
And lifts them o'er the hills, those hills o'er which
He seems to stand, and blazing with his light
Floods them with fire, they scarce are further off
Two thousand arrows' flights, or nearer still
A dart's five hundred casts : and yet we know
Between them and the sun lie mighty tracts
Of ocean waves, spread out beneath the sky,
And many thousand lands are interspersed,
Of divers peoples and of varied beasts.

(iv. 379–413, tr. Allison.)

The Fifth Book is thought by many critics to contain Lucretius's greatest work. In the course of a long passage on astronomy he proceeds to describe the creation of our world with the earth as its centre—the general belief in Lucretius's day—and moon, sun, and stars set—or rather moving—in the sky around it. Here again we have vivid imagination and a fine power of poetic illustration.

AND, first of all, the several parts of earth
Being heavy, mixed together, met and took
The lowest places : the more mixed they were,
The closer that their union was together,
The more they squeezed out those which then became
The sea, the stars, the moon, the sun and all
The world's great walls. And all of these were formed
Of light round atoms and much smaller things
Than was the earth. And then through openings fine,
Outbursting from the earth, the ether rose,
Fire-bearing ether, with its many flames ;
Just as we often see at early dawn,
When the sun's bright rays blush golden o'er the grass,
Sparkling with dew, and pools and rivers then
Exhale a mist, and earth itself almost
Appears to smoke, when all of these aloft
Are met together, then do clouds on high
With solid body cover up the sky.
'Twas thus the light diffusèd ether spread
And arched itself all round towards every part,
And hemmed in all things round with greedy grasp.
Then followed on with birth of sun and moon
Whose spheres turn round 'twixt ether and the earth,
Whom neither earth nor ether has annexed,
Not being so heavy as to settle down,
Nor yet so light as to pursue their way
In topmost coasts : and yet so placed between
The two, that living they roll on and are
Parts of the world, just as in us some part
May be at rest, while others move along.
Then these withdrawn, the earth, where now there spreads
The ocean's blue expanse, fell in at once,
And flooded all its trenches with salt gurge.
And daily, as the sun's and ether's heat
Forced with repeated blows to a solid mass

The earth to its furthest bounds, so that condensed
It gathered to its centre, so the more
The moisture forced from it increased the sea
And ocean's floating fields by oozing forth,
And evermore the parts of heat and air
Escaped and flew abroad and there condensed,
Far, far from earth, the glittering realms above.
The plains sank down, the lofty mountains grew;
For rocks could not subside, nor all the parts
Sink to one common level all throughout.

(v. 449–94, tr. Allison.)

The earth once created and the sea fitting into its place upon it, animals and birds first came into being. Their life was a struggle, as they preyed upon one another. In a passage, which has often been recognized as closely akin to modern ideas, he describes the 'survival of the fittest.'

AND in the ages after monsters died,
Perforce there perished many a stock, unable
By propagation to forge a progeny.
For whatsoever creatures thou beholdest
Breathing the breath of life, the same have been
Even from their earliest age preserved alive
By cunning, or by valour, or at least
By speed of foot or wing. And many a stock
Remaineth yet, because of use to man,
And so committed to man's guardianship.
Valour hath saved alive fierce lion-breeds
And many another terrorizing race,
Cunning the foxes, flight the antlered stags.
Light-sleeping dogs with faithful heart in breast,
However, and every kind begot from seed
Of beasts of draft, as, too, the woolly flocks
And hornèd cattle, all, my Memmius,
Have been committed to guardianship of men.
For anxiously they fled the savage beasts,

And peace they sought and their abundant foods,
Obtained with never labours of their own,
Which we secure to them as fit rewards
For their good service. But those beasts to whom
Nature has granted naught of these same things—
Beasts quite unfit by own free will to thrive
And vain for any service unto us,
In thanks for which we should permit their kind
To feed and be in our protection safe—
Those, of a truth, were wont to be exposed,
Enshackled in the gruesome bonds of doom,
As prey and booty for the rest, until
Nature reduced that stock to utter death.

(v. 855–77, tr. Leonard.)

The last three lines would not have done discredit as a scientific statement to Darwin himself.

We must quote one more passage from Book V—a magnificent paragraph on religion. Lucretius was no atheist: he believed in the existence of gods, beings of vast size and wonderful beauty who in the spaces between the worlds lived a life free from care and disturbance. But they had no relation with the world, and prayer to them was in vain; yet, he exclaims almost in the spirit of a well-known saying of Kant, when we see the wonders of the sky, who can help the feeling that they might after all be ordained by divine guidance? There is a pathos here such as we do not often find in Lucretius or indeed in poetry anywhere.

O HUMANKIND unhappy!—when it ascribed
Unto divinities such awesome deeds,
And coupled thereto rigours of fierce wrath!
What groans did men on that sad day beget
Even for themselves, and O what wounds for us,
What tears for our children's children! Nor, O man,
Is thy true piety in this: with head
Under the veil, still to be seen to turn
Fronting a stone, and ever to approach
Unto all altars; nor so prone on earth

The ' Survival of the Fittest '

Pompeian wall-painting

Forward to fall, to spread upturnèd palms
Before the shrines of gods, nor yet to dew
Altars with prófuse blood of four-foot beasts,
Nor vows with vows to link. But rather this :
To look on all things with a master eye
And mind at peace. For when we gaze aloft
Upon the skiey vaults of yon great world
And ether, fixèd high o'er twinkling stars,
And into our thought there come the journeyings
Of sun and moon, O then into our breasts,
O'erburdened already with their other ills,
Begins forthwith to rear its sudden head
One more misgiving ; lest o'er us, percase,
It be the gods' immeasurable power
That rolls, with varied motion, round and round
The far white constellations. For the lack
Of aught of reasons tries the puzzled mind :
Whether was ever a birth-time of the world,
And whether, likewise, any end shall be,
How far the ramparts of the world can still
Outstand this strain of ever-rousèd motion,
Or whether, divinely with eternal weal
Endowed, they can through endless tracts of age
Glide on, defying the o'er-mighty powers
Of the immeasurable ages.

(v. 1194–1217, tr. Leonard.)

The Sixth Book deals with a large number of miscellaneous phenomena in the sky and on earth, of which Lucretius, like all the Greek physical philosophers, felt that he was bound to give an explanation—clouds, lightning, thunder, earthquakes, hot springs, and many others. The book is in some ways an anti-climax after the Fifth, but both its reasoning and its expression are characteristic. We may take as typical the fine description of the creation of clouds.

INTO being
The clouds condense, when in this upper space
Of the high heaven have gathered suddenly,
As round they flew, unnumbered particles—
World's rougher ones, which can, though interlinked
With scanty couplings, yet be fastened firm,
The one on other caught. These particles
First cause small clouds to form ; and, thereupon,
These catch the one on other and swarm in a flock
And grow by their conjoining, and by winds
Are borne along, along, until collects
The tempest fury. Happens, too, the nearer
The mountain summits neighbour to the sky,
The more unceasingly their far crags smoke
With the thick darkness of swart cloud, because
When first the mists do form, ere ever the eyes
Can there behold them (tenuous as they be),
The carrier-winds will drive them up and on
Unto the topmost summits of the mountain ;
And then at last it happens, when they be
In vaster throng upgathered, that they can
By this their condensation lie revealed,
And that at same time they are seen to surge
From very vertex of the mountain up
Into far ether. For very fact and feeling,
As we up-climb high mountains, proveth clear
That windy are those upward regions free.

(vi. 451–69, tr. Leonard.)

The last phenomenon of which Lucretius treats is the spread of epidemic disease, and so he is led to close the book and the poem with a description of the Great Plague at Athens, based fairly closely on the account given by the contemporary Greek historian, Thucydides. It is grim and gruesome, but it shows Lucretius' descriptive power in a new field.

SUCH form of malady, such deadly plague
In Cecrop's borders made all the fields
Full of the dead, wasted its ways of men,
And robbed its cities of inhabitants.
At its first rising coming from the shore
Of Egypt, soon it covered a vast tract,
Of sky and ocean's watery plains, and fixed
Itself upon Pandion, there whole crowds
Were handed over to disease and death.
There first of all they found the head was seized
With burning heat, their bloodshot eyes suffused
With tears that dimmed the sight : the reddened throat
Within was moist with blood, the vocal chords
Were choked with ulcers, and the interpreter
Of mind, the tongue, was oozing out with gore,
Weak from disease, heavy, and rough to touch.
When through the throat the evil reached the chest,
And its destroying force had gathered sore
Upon the heart, all sick with maladies,
Then all the bands of life became unloosed.
Their breath rolled from the mouth in fœtid streams,
As stinking corpses smell thrown out of doors.
The mind itself with all its power and force,
The body too, were languishing away
On death's dark threshold, anxious despair
Accompanied their intolerable ills
And sad complaints and groans.

(vi. 1138–59, tr. Allison.)

Lucretius died in 55 B.C. at the early age of 43. Few who know his poem well would fail to name it as the second, if not quite the greatest poem in Latin literature, and this is a proud claim to be made on behalf of a didactic poet, whose material must necessarily be to some extent intractable. From these extracts at least some idea may have been gained of his acuteness of reasoning, of his astounding power of description and the passionate force of his convictions.

In the next generation, the Augustan age, poets had no longer to pray, as Lucretius did, that Mars should lay aside his arms for a while, that man might listen to the poet's words. The victories of Augustus had decided the fate of Rome and the Roman world, and had again brought peace to men. There were, it is true, wars from time to time on the borders of the Empire, but these were little felt in Italy, and seemed but far-off echoes after the bloody struggles on Italian soil in the previous century. This was the opportunity, and the patronage of the Court and of Court circles added encouragement to opportunity. Augustus himself and his 'Home Secretary', Maecenas, gathered round them a select set of Court poets and the example thus given was widely followed. Didactic poetry shared in this movement, and though its models were still largely Alexandrian, there was a greater width of subject and greater originality of treatment. Astronomy still claimed its adherents, as we shall see, and geography, the training of hunting-dogs, birds and beasts, and other topics were attempted with more or less success.

But among these would-be instructors in verse one name stands out supreme in this field as in Epic, that of PUBLIUS VERGILIUS MARO.[1] To understand Virgil's work as a didactic poet, we must appreciate something both of the circumstances of the time and those of his own life. The advent of a permanent peace did far more than give men leisure; it inspired them with the idea of the beginning of a new era,[2] in which the freedom and justice of the mythical golden age should come again and men and nature work once more in harmony. No one knows better than our own generation what are men's expectations at the conclusion of a terrible period of war. At such a time public-spirited men long to take their part in 'reconstruction' and to use their different talents to this end. It is clear too that Augustus and his ministers did all they could to encourage this notion of a new start and that the revival of agriculture in the neglected countryside of Italy was one of their chief aims. This spirit of re-birth Virgil felt to the full, and his early life fitted him to be the poet of husbandry. The son of a merchant's servant who had settled on a farm near Mantua, he was brought up among country sights and sounds, and what was still more important for a poet of agriculture, the love of the country and country life always remained with him. And so, though scholars can trace that much of his information and many

[1] See pp. 22 ff., 84, 130, 212 ff.
[2] See in particular Virgil's Fourth Eclogue.

Olives silvering on the roadside near Assisi

Photograph by Mr. Percival Hart

of his precepts are derived from the prose treatises on agriculture of Cato (*c.* 150 B. C.) and Varro (*c.* 50 B. C.), yet the spirit is always his own. He claims Hesiod indeed as his Greek model, but in the *Georgics* the gloomy drudgery of the poor Greek farmer is turned into a happy co-operation with nature, full indeed of hard work and many varied occupations, but bright with joy in his life and with a full appreciation both of nature's beauty and the dignity of man's toil.

The 'Poem on Husbandry' or *Georgics* (Virgil was always enough of an Alexandrian to like Greek titles) is divided into four books. In the first he treats of agriculture and crops, in the second of trees and in particular of the culture of the vine, in the third of the live stock, horses, cattle, and sheep, and in the fourth —perhaps rather unexpectedly but with a manifest personal affection—of bees. In all four books there are many technical passages in which he describes the farmer's ways and means. These Virgil, with something of the same instinct as Lucretius, makes poetry by his own intuition and imagination, but he never scruples to digress when his poetic instinct leads him aside, and some of the finest work in the *Georgics* is in these digressions. His work too is more artificial, or, perhaps one would rather say, shows more conscious art; there is a wealth of learning behind it, shown in literary epithets and allusions or in quotations and imitations from Lucretius and his other Latin predecessors and from Greek poets as well. But learning never overloads his verse, and the true poet and the true lover of country life stand out from it all. It will be useful again to quote from several translations, which bring out different points in Virgil's style.

The First Book, after a dedication to Maecenas, and an invocation to all the hierarchy of heaven including Augustus himself, plunges straight into its subject and tells the farmer his duty at the opening of the year. The translation of Mr. A. S. Way will give us some idea of the length and richness of the Virgilian line:

IN the birth-tide of spring, when melt from the mountains the ice and the snow,
And the crumbling clods are breaking down as the west-winds blow,
Then let the bull begin to groan, at the plough deep-thrust
As he strains, let the share gleam bright as the furrows scour it of rust.

That field will grant to the prayers of the greediest husbandman more
Than all, which twice to the sunglare, and twice to the winter frore
Hath been bared: his barns ever burst with their measureless golden store.
But, or ever we cleave with the share this chartless sea of good,
The winds let us heedfully learn, and the sky's ever-changing mood,
The inherited needs for nurture and dressing of soil and soil,
What fruits each region will yield, and what deny to our toil.
Here corn-crops, yonder grapes in richer abundance glow,
Otherwhere offspring of trees, or unbidden the green tides flow
Of the grass.

(*Georg.* i. 43–56, tr. Way.)

We need not attempt to follow Virgil's development of his theme closely; his is not a close argument like Lucretius's, but ranges freely from one topic to another. Let us take a characteristically Virgilian passage describing the signs which denote the coming storm; it combines his learning with his observation of nature and his unique faculty for expressing the actions of animals in exquisite poetry.

WHEN thunder comes from quarters of the North,
When Eastern halls and Western peal it forth;
With brimming ditches swim the country vales
And every seaman furleth dripping sails.
No storm bursts unforeseen: or ere it rise,
The soaring crane to dingled shelter hies;
Or, gazing up at heaven with nostrils wide,
The heifer snuffs the breezes that betide:
Or round the lake the twittering swallows scud,
And frogs croak grandam ditties in the mud.
And oft the emmet[1] from her snug abode

[1] *And oft the emmet*: this passage was taken by Virgil with a few alterations—all improvements—from a poem by Varro of Atax.

Oxen ploughing (between Montefalco and Foligno)

Photograph by Mr. Percival Hart

Brings out her eggs and plods a chary road :
The vasty rainbow drinks ; the crows fly home,
With jostling wings the cawing squadrons come.
The sundry sea-birds, and the birds that bore
The Asian marsh of sweet Caÿster's [1] shore
With copious dews their bustling shoulders lave,
And duck quick heads beneath the curling wave,
Then deeper still into the breakers dash,
And frolic in extravagance of splash.
But stalking lonely on the arid plain,
The reprobate raven mightily croaks for rain.
Not e'en the maids, who ply their nightly toil,
Can fail to know the rising of the storm ;
In earthen lamps the sparkle of the oil
They spy, and on the wick the crumbs of mushroom form.
(*Georg.* i. 429–54, tr. Blackmore.)

The Second Book is concerned with plants and trees and in particular with what remain still the typical products of the Italian hillside, the olive and the vine. But Virgil has also put into it some of his greatest passages of digression, full both of a love of the Italian country for its own sake and of a lofty patriotism built on the dream of a regenerated Italy.

We may look first at a technical passage, in which Virgil is speaking of the methods of vine-planting and the choice of soils for that purpose ; even in this rather arid topic there is food for his imagination and opportunity for his vivid touch, though for the moment the literary epithet and allusion are in abeyance.

NOTE all these things, and bethink thee betimes in the sun to dry
Thy land, with trenches and furrows to score the hill-slopes high,
And to lay the upturned clods all bare to the north-wind cold,
Ere thou plant the vine's glad children. Fields of crumbling mould
Be the best : the wind and the chill frost work to render them so

[1] *Caÿster*, the river of Lydia, on which Ephesus stood.

With the brawny delver who tosseth and stirreth the earth to and fro.
Nay, men who will let slip no device of watchful care
Choose out betimes a place, and prepare them a nursery there
Of soil like that where the vines shall soon be orderly ranged,
Lest the babe-trees recognize not the mother suddenly changed.
Nay, even the quarters of heaven do men on the young bark score,
That, according as each tree faced, which side soever bore
The heat of the south, and turned its back to the northern pole,
So they might plant it, so potent is early habit's control.

(*Georg.* ii. 259–72, tr. Way.)

The conclusion of the Second Book must be quoted; for it seems to sum up all Virgil's aspirations as the poet of the country and to look forward to that era of peace, when the Italian shall again be a husbandman and lead his active pious life far removed from the intrigues of politics and the luxury of life in Rome.

ME before all things may the Muses sweet,
Whose rites I bear with mighty passion pierced,
Receive, and show the paths and stars of heaven,
The sun's eclipses and the labouring moons,
From whence the earthquake, by what power the seas
Swell from their depths, and, every barrier burst,
Sink back upon themselves, why winter-suns
So haste to dip 'neath ocean, or what check
The lingering night retards. But if to these
High realms of nature the cold curdling blood
About my heart bar access, then be fields
And stream-washed vales my solace, let me love
Rivers and woods, inglorious. Oh, for you
Plains, and Spercheius, and Taygete,[1]
By Spartan maids o'er-revelled! Oh, for one,
Would set me in deep dells of Haemus cool,
And shield me with his boughs' o'ershadowing might!

[1] *Spercheius*, the river of Sparta, and *Taygete*, the mountain which rises above Sparta.

Happy, who had the skill[1] to understand
Nature's hid causes, and beneath his feet
All terrors cast, and death's relentless doom,
And the loud roar of greedy Acheron.[2]
Blest too is he who knows the rural gods,
Pan, old Silvanus, and the sister-nymphs!
Him nor the rods of public power[3] can bend,
Nor kingly purple, nor fierce feud that drives
Brother to turn on brother, nor descent
Of Dacian from the Danube's leaguèd flood,
Nor Rome's great State, nor kingdoms like to die;
Nor hath he grieved through pitying of the poor,
Nor envied him that hath. What fruit the boughs,
And what the fields, of their own bounteous will
Have borne, he gathers; nor iron rule of laws,
Nor maddened Forum have his eyes beheld,
Nor archives of the people.

(*Georg.* ii. 475–502, tr. Rhoades.)

In the Third Book Virgil treats of the live stock on the farm, and possibly because the subject had a stronger attraction for him there is less digression here and stricter attention to business. The horses claim his attention first and we may take as typical a passage in which he describes with all the learning of a connoisseur the points in a stud-horse; yet we may notice that observation and poetry never desert him.

FROM the first doth the foal of a high-bred stock, as he paceth the plains,
Lift high his feet, and he planteth on earth a springy limb.
Ever he leadeth the way for the rest: no terrors for him
Hath the threatening torrent; he trusteth himself to the untried bridge:
He is scared not at meaningless noises. His neck is a high-arched ridge:

[1] *Happy, who had the skill*, &c., an allusion to Lucretius.
[2] *Acheron*, a river of the lower world.
[3] *rods of public power*, the emblems of office of the Roman magistrates.

Clean-cut is his head, full-fleshed is his back, and his barrel short ;
His high-mettled chest is billowy with muscle. The comelier sort
Be the bay and the grey : of all coats worst be the dun and the white.
Once more, if from far away arms clash as in grapple of fight,
He cannot be still, pricks ears, his limbs are quivering,
From his nostrils the volumed breath like smoke from a fire doth he fling.
He tosseth a dense mane back o'er his rightward shoulder to sweep.
His spine is a valley between two ridges : his hoofs dint deep
The earth, and the solid horn wakes thunder at every leap.
Such Cyllarus was, who was tamed by the curb of Amyclae's king
Pollux,[1] and they of whom the Grecian poets sing,
The chariot-pair of Mars, and mighty Achilles' team.
So likewise seemed fleet Saturn,[2] when over his neck to stream
He tossed his mane as his queen drew near, and, fleeing away,
Filled sky-encountering Pelion's glens with his clarion neigh.

(*Georg.* iii. 75–94, tr. Way.)

From horses the poet passes to cattle and is just as exact in his description of the points of the good cow and the qualities of different breeds. But a fine digression gives us a splendid description of the fight of two bulls :

IN Sila's depth fair heifer feeds at large ;
Headlong her suitors hurry to the charge,
With give and take, and wounds pell mell, and gore
Shed black upon their bodies ; as they lock
With tug and groans, horns shiver in the shock,
While woods and long Olympus echo back their roar.
No more the warriors share a common home,
But exiled far the vanquish'd bull must roam ;

[1] *Pollux* and Castor were the twin demigods of Greek legend, and Cyllarus their horse.

[2] *Saturn* is said to have disguised himself as a horse in order to conceal an amour with a nymph from his wife Rhea.

In foreign parts he groans o'er his disgrace,
The conqueror's blows who reigneth in his place :
The love he lost for nothing, and the grief
To see the last of his ancestral fief.
For this he trains his muscle without stint,
And lies all night upon a bed of flint,
He lives on hairy leaves, and reedy thorns,
Lunges, and learns to throw fire into his horns,
Jousting at trees, and girding at the blast
Rehearses battle, with the sand upcast :
Then rears his flag, with pristine power aglow,
And dashes headlong on the oblivious foe.
As when a wave rears white in the far deep,
And up the offing drags its volumed sweep,
Then rolling landward roars through rocky walls,
And, big as the mountain's self, towers and falls :
Deep waters boil out from the whirl below,
And dash the black sand up the undertow.

(*Georg.* iii. 219–41, tr. Blackmore.)

We may notice in this passage the evident sympathy with the defeated bull and the attribution of almost human feelings to him—very characteristic of Virgil—and also the magnificence of the comparison of his onrush to the advance of a wave at sea.

The last part of the book is devoted to the flocks, and the book concludes with a description of a great cattle-plague which once raged in Italy. An extract from this may have an added interest in that the whole passage is modelled on Lucretius's description of the plague at Athens; Virgil is gruesome too, but we feel a more human touch; he is not the mere observer, but the sympathizer.

HERE from distempered heavens erewhile arose
A piteous season, with the full fierce heat
Of autumn glowed, and cattle-kindreds all
And all wild creatures to destruction gave,
Tainted the pools, the fodder charged with bane.
Nor simple was the way of death, but when

Hot thirst through every vein impelled had drawn
Their wretched limbs together, anon o'erflowed
A watery flux, and all their bones piecemeal
Sapped by corruption to itself absorbed.
Oft in mid sacrifice to heaven—the white
Wool-woven fillet half wreathed about his brow—
Some victim, standing by the altar, there
Betwixt the loitering carles a-dying fell :
Or, if betimes the slaughtering priest had struck,
Nor with its heapèd entrails blazed the pile,
Nor seer to seeker thence could answer yield ;
Nay, scarce the up-stabbing knife with blood was stained,
Scarce sullied with thin gore the surface-sand.
Hence die the calves in many a pasture fair,
Or at full cribs their lives' sweet breath resign ;
Hence on the fawning dog comes madness, hence
Racks the sick swine a gasping cough that chokes
With swelling at the jaws : the conquering steed,
Uncrowned of effort and heedless of the sward,
Faints, turns him from the springs, and paws the earth
With ceaseless hoof : low droop his ears, wherefrom
Bursts fitful sweat, a sweat that waxes cold
Upon the dying beast ; the skin is dry,
And rigidly repels the handler's touch.

(*Georg.* iii. 478–502, tr. Rhoades.)

The Fourth Book is devoted to bees—at first sight a disproportionate treatment of a subordinate subject, but we must remember that honey was more important in antiquity when it was the sole means of sweetening food. It is also clear that Virgil himself had a peculiar interest in bees, perhaps because in their organized community they presented very obviously that parallel to human life which we have already seen him tacitly seeking. An early passage in which he describes a fight between two swarms is a good example of this 'human' interest in the bees ; we may notice specially the irony and pathos of the last two lines.

BUT if they march to battle (for with two
Corrival kings [1] tumultuous discords brew)
At once 'tis easy to forecast afar
The public mood, the hearts that pant to war :
The martial blare of metal chides the slack,
And voice that rings like jerking clarion's crack :
All of a bustle, hip and thigh, they close,
Flash wings, whet stings and square their arms to fence,
And round their king, and own head-quarters, dense,
Pell-mell they trumpet challenge to the foes.
At length a fine May-day and fields at large,
Out of the gates they burst, and then the charge !
A shock to heaven : they swirl in a great ball,
They hug, they fight, and headlong down they fall :
No thicker pours the hailstorm, nor so fast
From shaken holm-tree pelts the shower of mast.
The kings, in thick of fight, outwing the rest,
A giant spirit in a pigmy breast ;
So staunch, so dogged not to flinch, or ere
The crushing victor routs them here and there.

(*Georg.* iv. 67–87, tr. Blackmore.)

A brilliant passage describes the daily work of the hive, the distribution of labour and the co-operation, which make the bees so like a human community.

THEY only have children in common : all homes of their city are one :
To the majesty of Law subjected their life-days run.
A fatherland and a settled home they only know.
They bethink them of coming winter, they toil through the summer-glow,
And all that they win for the general use lay by in store.
Some watch for the nation's subsistence, by covenant bound, evermore :

[1] *two kings* : the ancients always believed the leader of the swarm to be a king, not a queen.

In the field some labour ; within the home's seclusion some
Lay down the narcissus' tears and the tree-bark's viscid gum
For their honeycomb's first foundations, then hang therefrom in their place
The close-clinging wax of the cells. Some rear the hope of the race
To full growth : honey, of sweet things purest, do others store
Till with liquid nectar the straining cells are brimming o'er.
Some are there, to whom 'tis allotted to ward the gates of the town :
In turn do they watch for the rain and the heaven's cloud-knit frown :
They receive the harvester's burdens, they close in phalanx of war,
And they chase that thriftless rabble, the drones, from their precincts afar.
'Tis a fever of toil ; thyme-scented the odorous honey-drops are.
'Tis as when the Cyclopes[1] in haste from ingots tough red-glowing
Forge thunderbolts : some are indrawing the blast and anon outblowing
From the bellows of bull-hide : others are plunging the hissing brass
In the tank. Even Etna groans 'neath the anvil's ponderous mass.
Mightily swing they alternately up for the rhythmical blow
Their arms ; in the grip of the pincers the metal they turn to and fro.
Even so—if by giants' work we may set things small as these—
The gain-getter's passion inborn spurs on the Cecropian bees.

(*Georg.* iv. 153–77, tr. Way.)

Lastly we may quote a short passage in which Virgil, following the doctrine of the Stoic philosophy, suggests that the bees

[1] *Cyclopes*, the legendary smiths, giants, whose forge was beneath Etna.

have within them a spark of the divine mind, which is their instinct. Here Virgil, the most truly religious of Latin poets, shows us his deeper thoughts.

LED by these tokens, and with such traits to guide,
Some say that unto bees a share is given
Of the Divine Intelligence, and to drink
Pure draughts of ether ; for God permeates all—
Earth, and wide ocean, and the vault of heaven—
From whom flocks, herds, men, beasts of every kind,
Draw each at birth the fine essential flame ;
Yea, and that all things hence to Him return,
Brought back by dissolution, nor can death
Find place : but, each into his starry rank,
Alive they soar, and mount the heights of heaven.

(*Georg.* iv. 219–27, tr. Rhoades.)

In Lucretius and Virgil Latin didactic poetry—and perhaps the didactic poetry of the world—reached its height, and we might well leave it there. But there are three other poems which merit mention, partly because they are typical of much not quite first-class work which was done in Rome. PUBLIUS OVIDIUS NASO (see also *Elegiac Poetry*[1] and *The Novel*[2]) invented a form of didactic poetry unique in Latin in his *Fasti*, a record in verse of the festivals of the old Roman Calendar. The poem is unfinished, only the first six months of the year being completed. The main motive is antiquarian : Ovid attempts to account for the origin of the various ceremonies and customs and introduces for this purpose an odd jumble of philology, aetiological explanation, and Graeco-Roman legend : often in dealing with the last he lets his passion for story-telling have full play. But he was really interested in the subject and occasionally records a minute description of the ceremonial which is of great value to students of the old religion.

We may take two passages as typical. In the first Ovid imagines himself interrogating Janus, the deity after whom January was named, as to the custom of present-giving at the beginning of the New Year and wishes to know the reason of the customary gift of a small coin.

[1] pp. 153 ff. [2] pp. 242 ff.

NOW why they money give, I fain would learn ;
For I no portion of your Feast would lose,
And never yet could find how this arose.
He smiling said, Oh ! skilled in tuneful rhymes,
More than in knowledge of these latter times,
To fancy gold less pleasing in perfume,
Less sweet to taste than honey from the comb ;
Even I, on earth while Saturn held his seat,
Saw scarcely one to whom gain was not sweet.
In time the appetite more fierce did grow,
Till farther it can scarcely find to go.
Wealth is more valued now than ere before,
When Rome was new, and all its people poor ;
When a small house the great Quirinus held,
Or some rank rush-bed gathered from the field ;
Jove in his fane could scarce his height display,
And brandished thunder made of potters' clay.
Leaves decked that Capitol which gems adorn,
And flocks were fed by senators at morn,
But when her head the City's Fortune reared,
And Rome among the supreme gods appeared,
Their wealth increased, wealth still they raging crave,
And when they have too much, more still would have.
Once they gave brass ; the omen now is gold.
And the new money supersedes the old.

(*Fasti*, i. 189 ff., tr. J. Taylor.)

In this passage we see besides a genuine antiquarian spirit something of Ovid's sly humour and something of his power of satire on the habits of his own times. In the second passage, which comes from a description of the rustic festival of the Palilia, we have an example of his careful observation of the details of ceremonial—also an attractive piece of description showing evident sympathy with the occupations of country life.

YOUR visits to the Virgin Altar make,
Ye people all, and of its gifts partake!
Each who will these receive with faithful heart,
By Vesta's power shall purified depart:
A horse's blood, a calf burnt in the womb,
And withered bean-stalks, furnish the perfume.
Shepherd, with care your pregnant ewes survey,
When to the fold they come at close of day,
Sprinkling the water upon all around,
From the wet bough,—then with it sweep the ground;
Let leafy branches the sheep-pen embower,
And festooned garlands decorate the door;
From living sulphur let the flames aspire,
And the sheep bleat, touched by the liquid fire;
Flame from male-olive and pine-torches raise,
Let crackling laurels animate the blaze,
And savine herbs,—for powers to these belong,
Noxious to sheep, and to their unborn young;
The millet-cakes in numerous baskets bear,
The Rustic Goddess loves that rustic fare.
Bring her own curds and whey, the milking-pail;
The savoury cheese in neat-cut slices deal,
And with warm milk, that froths like foaming spray,
To Pales, Dweller of the Woodlands, pray.
Say then,—protect the herd and herdsman too,
And may my cattle every harm eschew!
Repel disease, let men and flocks be strong,
Nor of our dogs forget the watchful throng!
Bring back at night all who went forth at morn,
Nor let me grieve for lambs that wolves have torn!
Famine avert, give herbs and leaves in store,
Water to drink, and bathe in, evermore!
Full be the udders of my ewes and cows,
And cheese yield profit equal to my vows!
May the sour runnet curds in plenty give,

And the clear whey flow through the chequered sieve!
Strong be my rams, healthy their woolly mates,
Whilst from the fold full many a lambkin bleats!
Let the full fleeces in huge heaps expand,
Soft, fine, and fit for tender maiden's hand!
These things I pray for; and that every year
To Lady Pales I big cakes may bear!—
By prayers like these the Goddess may be won;
Recite these thrice, facing the rising sun,
And on your heads the living water pour,
Bright as the dew that gems the opening flower;
Then from your cup, or skimming-dish, propine
The snow-white milk and the mull'd purple wine;
And through the straw-heaped bonfire's crackling glow,
With headlong leap your agile bodies throw.

(*Fasti*, iv. 731 ff., tr. J. Taylor.)

The poem of CAIUS MANILIUS, written during the reign of Augustus, was Alexandrian in motive and dealt with astronomy; but with the astronomy it combined a superstitious astrology and a vague religious sense which lifts it out of the commonplace. Much of the poem is poor and almost mechanical, but here and there are passages which reach a much higher level.

We may take as an example of Manilius's style and subject a passage from an early English translation, which, if a little stilted, yet gives a fair idea of his manner. He is describing the birth of the world, and the rather elaborated and calculated style may be compared with the simpler and more effective narrative of Lucretius (p. 106).

NOW since from Heaven itself our Verse descends,
And down to Earth Fate's settled Order tends,
We first must Nature's General State reherse,
And draw the Picture of the Universe.
We can but guess its Birth: obscured it lies
Beyond the reach of Men and Deities.
Yet though its Birth be hid, its Form 's disclos'd,
And in due Order all its Parts dispos'd;

Fire up to the Aetherial Confines flew,
And a round Wall of Flame 'bout Nature drew,
The subtle Air posest the second Place
Diffus'd throughout the vast Globe's middle Space,
Whence its hot Neighbour draws cool nourishment :
The third Lot level'd the wide Sea's Extent,
And in a liquid Plain the Waters spread,
Whence hungry Air is by thin Vapours fed ;
Prest down its Sediment, Earth lowest fell,
Whilst sand-mixt slime contracting did expel
The subtler moysture ; which to flight constrain'd
Rose by degrees 'till it the surface gain'd,
And the more that into pure Water went,
The more the squeez'd out Seas the drain'd Earth pent,
Settling in hollow Vales ; whilst Hills thrust out
Their Heads from Waves circling the Globe about :
This lowest, in the midst is still confin'd,
On all parts equally from Heaven disjoin'd,
Secur'd from further falling by its fall,
The Middle both and Bottom of this All,
And did not Earth by its self-Poize suspend,
Phoebus, the Stars approaching, could not bend
His Course to set, nor set, e're rise again,
Nor *Phoebe* drive through the Aereal plain
Her Wave-drenched Steeds ; nor *Phosphorus* the Light
E're usher more, if Hesperus to Night.

(*Astronomicon*, i. 118–24, 147–78, tr. Sherburne.)

Lastly there is a mysterious poem called the *Aetna*. It used to be placed among the minor works of Virgil, but though all critics would now agree that it is not Virgil's, there is still much dispute as to its date and authorship, some claiming it as the work of an Augustan poet, others placing it much later ; some would indeed assign it to Seneca's pupil, Lucilius Junior, and therefore to the reign of Nero. It is an attempt rather in the manner of the sixth book of Lucretius to account for the phenomena of volcanoes, which it does by strange and elaborate theories of subterranean

winds. One passage will suffice to show its quality. It is of general character and deals rather sententiously with the mission of science, arguing that it is just as important that men should investigate the phenomena of earth as the mysteries of the sky.

NOT with the eyes alone like sheep to gaze
On wonders, or with belly prone on earth
To feed the heavy limbs in listless ease,
But to learn nature's secrets and to seek
Her hidden laws ; to consecrate the mind,
To raise the head to heaven and to know
The fateful elements of the mighty world
—Whether they fear an end or live for aye
With firm frame moored by an eternal chain—
To know the sun's course and the lesser orb
The moon doth twelve times tread in his one year,
Which stars on track predestin'd run and which
Erratic[1] move at their unfetter'd will ;
Nor all the wondrous things of this great world
To leave confused in undigested mass,
But to mark each one by its several signs
And set in sure array each marvel learnt—
This is the soul's supreme and godlike joy.
Yet 'tis an earlier task to know the earth
And mark what wonders nature works therein ;
For earth is closer kin to man than sky.
What greater madness can a mortal seize
Than wand'ring in Jove's realm to seek the stars
And leave neglected marvels at his feet ?

(*Aetna*, 224–34, 248–57.)

Perhaps direct instruction is not really a fruitful theme for poetry, but in Latin amid much second-rate work it has at least given us two of the greatest poems in the language.

[1] i.e. the planets.

ELEGIAC

THE Elegiac couplet consists of the heroic hexameter followed by a line of five feet, a pentameter, divided into halves each of two and a half feet. It is well illustrated by the imitative lines :

In the hexameter rises the fountain's silvery column,
In the pentameter aye falling in melody back.

Traditionally the metre was regarded as fitted for lamentations, and the name interpreted as 'Say "alas!"' But we first find it used in Greek to express warlike enthusiasm, by Callinus of Ephesus (eighth century B.C.?) and Tyrtaeus of Sparta (seventh century), though Archilochus of Paros, more noted for his iambics, seems to have employed it in dirges. Solon, the great Athenian reformer, used this metre for writing of his political exploits, while later in the sixth century Theognis of Megara and Phocylides of Miletus wrote proverbs in the same strain. Pigres of Halicarnassus is credited with interpolating a pentameter after each hexameter in the Iliad, but it was Mimnermus of Colophon (see *Pageant of Greece*, p. 83) who associated elegy notably with love, and his example was followed by the Alexandrians, Antimachus of Colophon, Philetas (one of Propertius's models, and perhaps not without influence on Tibullus), Hermesianax, Euphorion, and Callimachus (who had his effect on Propertius and Ovid, as well as Catullus). Throughout later Greek literature this form was used for epigrams, especially for inscriptions on tombs or votive offerings (see *Pageant of Greece*, pp. 384–94).

The earliest Latin Elegiacs we possess are some epitaphs, of which the two following are attributed to ENNIUS (see also pp. 18 ff., 174 ff., 282) :

On Scipio Africanus, conqueror of Hannibal :

Here lieth one to whom nor friend nor foe
Could for his deeds a fit requital show.

On himself :

No meed of tears nor wailing funeral give :
I fly upon the lips of men, and live.

By some unknown author :

Epitaph of Cornelius Scipio Hispallus, praetor 139 B.C.

I by my life increased my race's worth,
Offspring begot, my father's deeds ensued,
My forbears' praise secured, approved my birth,
My stock with lustre of high rank endued.

The epigrams of QUINTUS LUTATIUS CATULUS (consul 102 B.C., and, with Marius, victor in the wars with the Cimbri) show an adaptation of the Greek use ; the first imitates Callimachus :

I

MY soul has fled ; it has perhaps with Theotimus hid ;
It often does. Yes, so it has ; it 's sheltering there no doubt.
What, shameless soul and shameless host ! what, did I not forbid
That runaway to be let in, nay, bid him be thrown out ?
We'll go and look. Yet sore indeed we fear lest in a trice
Ourselves be caught. What can we do ? Venus, what 's your advice ?

II

Greeting Aurora's rising I did stand :
Sudden doth Roscius rise on my left hand.
Gods, with your favour, I've presum'd to see
A mortal fairer than a Deitie. (tr. Lovelace.)

CATULLUS[1] used the metre for love poems and for personal attacks ; many of his best poems will be found translated in the section on Lyric and Occasional Verse. Here may be given extracts, one showing an appreciation of mountain scenery, the other dealing with the eternal problem of the aspirate :

AS gushing from the airy mountain steeps
Springs the bright torrent from a mossy rock,
And tumbles down the vale in headlong leaps
Across the roadway where the people flock,
And cools the weary wayfarer a-thirst
When the hot sun makes the burnt furrows burst ;

[1] See pp. 21, 62 ff.

Or as to seaman tossed in pitchy squall
There comes a softer favouring wind, when he
Doth now on Castor, now on Pollux call;
Such was the help of Allius to me. (lxviii. 57, tr. Marris.)

'HADVANTAGE' was what Arry used to say:
'*H*ambush' for 'ambush' was his regular way.
He thought his own pronouncing best on earth—
To asp'rate '*h*ambush' all that he was worth.
His mother so pronounced: so did her brother,
His mother's father, likewise his grandmother.

Arry was sent abroad: our ears had rest:
We heard the same words tenderly caressed,
Nor thought again to hear such aspiration—
When sudden came the *h*awful *h*information:
The 'Ionian' waves, since Arry's tour, were lost,
*H*into the 'igh seas of '*H*ionia' tossed!
(lxxxiv, tr. Wight Duff, *Writers of Rome*, p. 34.)

In 70 B.C. were born Cornelius Gallus and Virgil. Gallus is usually regarded as the earliest of those who made Latin elegy an independent province of literature. He wrote four books concerning his mistress Lycoris; we have none of this work. Quintilian observes that his style was 'harsher' than that of his successors. There survives a short elegiac poem entitled 'The Barmaid', which has been attributed to VIRGIL,[1] and may possibly be an early work of his:

THE Syrian Girl, who haunts the taverns round,
Her forehead with a Greek tiara bound:
Expert in dance her pliant sides to twine
With sound of castanets, now reels with wine.
Why should it please to plod our weary way
Through cloudy dust, in summer's scorching day?
Here the bower'd walk a breezy cool entwines,
And chequer'd shadows fall from arching vines.
Pour'd from pitch'd cask the new-drawn wine runs clear;
A brook, in brawling murmurs, gurgles near.

[1] See pp. 22 ff., 84, 112 ff., 212 ff.

Come Calybita ! scarce your ass can bear
The sweating heat : your four-foot favourite spare.
Now with shrill note cicadas rend the brakes,
Now in cool haunt his heat the lizard slakes.
Come—panting rest beneath the vine-leaf shade ;
Your languid head with rosy fillet braid ;
Ravish the soft lips of that Syrian fair :
A mischief on the man with brows of care !
Why for ungrateful dust reserve the flower ?
Why for a grave-stone pluck the fragrant bower ?
Bring wine ; bring dice ; avaunt to-morrow's doom !
Death twitches now our ears, and ' live ! ' he cries ; ' I come !

(tr. Elton.)

Quintilian gives the palm for finish and elegance to TIBULLUS (*c.* 55–19 B.C.). This poet celebrates two mistresses, Delia and Nemesis. His tastes are for the country ; he loathes war ; simple contentment alternates in his poems with gentle melancholy ; his lines are delicate, winsome, and lucid. The following poems describe his ideals :

THEIR piles of golden ore let others heap,
And hold their countless roods of cultured soil,
Whom neighbouring foes in constant terror keep—
The weary victims of unceasing toil.
Let clang of arms and trumpet's blast dispel
The balmy sleep their hearts in vain desire ;
At home in poverty and ease I'd dwell,
My hearth aye gleaming with a cheerful fire.
Nor let me blush to wield at times the rake,
Or with the goad the laggard oxen ply ;
The straggling lamb within my bosom take,
Or kid, by heedless dam left lone to die.
The lone stump in the field I still revere,
Or ancient stone whence flowery garlands nod,
In cross-roads set : the first-fruits of the year
I duly offer to the peasant's god.

Then smile, ye gods! nor view with high disdain
The frugal gifts clean earthen bowls convey;
Such earthen vessels earst the ancient swain
Moulded and fashioned from the plastic clay.
The wealth and harvest-stores my sires possessed
I covet not: few sheaves will yield me bread;
Enough, reclining on my couch to rest,
And stretch my limbs upon the wonted bed.
How sweet to lie and hear the wild winds roar,
To clasp my love safe to my gentle breast;
Or, when the cold South's sleety torrents pour,
Lulled by the rain to sink secure to rest!
This lot be mine: let him be rich, 'tis fair,
Who braves the wrathful sea and tempests drear:
Oh, rather perish gold and gems than e'er
One fair one for my absence shed a tear!
Delia, I court not praise, if mine thou be;
Let men cry lout and clown, I'll bear the brand;
In my last moments let me gaze on thee,
And dying, clasp thee with my faltering hand!
Nor only thou wilt weep; no youth, no maid,
With tearless eye will from my tomb repair:
But, Delia, vex not thou thy lover's shade;
Thy tender cheeks, thy streaming tresses spare!
Too soon will Death be here with shroud of shade,
Let us be one in love while Fates allow;
Dull age creeps on, the joys of youth and maid
And Love's soft speech ill suit a hoary brow.

(i. 1, tr. Cranstoun.)

I'M dragged to war, and now, perchance, some foe
Bears the dread shaft that's doomed to pierce my side;
Save! ye paternal gods who watched me grow
And play about your feet in infant pride.

Then ye were pleased when wine before you flowed,
Or wheaten garland girt your holy brow;
The swain gave cakes, his little girl bestowed
Pure honeycomb, when ye had heard his vow.
Ah me! why court dark death in war? all round
It creeps unseen and silent, ever near:
Below, no crops—no vines—but the fierce hound
And the grim boatman of the Stygian mere.
And there with half-burnt hair and sunken cheeks
By the dark lake the wan-faced tenants roam;
Far happier he whom tardy old age seeks
Among his children in a humble home.
In peace grow bright the mattock and the share,
While rust in darkness rots the warriors arms—
The jolly swains from groves in waggons bear
Their wives and children back to smiling farms.
Then 'tis Love's wars that rage; her tresses rent
The maiden mourns, and weeps o'er broken doors,
And tender cheeks all bruised, till penitent
The victor his mad strength of hand deplores.
In wanton ease between the angry pair
Sits Love, and with ill words the feud supplies;
Ah! steel and stone the man who'd strike the fair;
This is to drag the gods down from the skies.
Enough, if he should tear her silken vest,
Or spoil the wreaths that round her tresses creep,
Or move her heart to tears: oh! four times blest
Is he whose ire can make a maiden weep!

(i. 10, tr. Cranstoun.)

HIS wife will bear a son to crown his bliss;
Grasping his father's ears he'll snatch a kiss;
Nor will the grandsire grudge to tend the boy,
For all his years prattling with childish joy.

(ii. 5, tr. Cranstoun.)

Tibullus has given us an idyllic description of the country festival of the 'Ambarvalia', or Lustration of the Fields (for a prose account of the scene it is worth while to turn to Pater's *Marius the Epicurean*):

ATTEND! and favour! as our Sires ordain;
The Fields we lustrate, and the rising Grain:
This hallow'd Day suspend each Swain his Toil,
Rest let the Plough, and rest th' uncultur'd Soil:
Unyoke the Steer, his Racks heap high with Hay,
And deck with Wreaths his honest Front to-day.
Let all to Heaven's Service be apply'd!
And lay, ye thrifty Fair, your Wool aside!
See! to the Flames the Victim comes unbound!
Follows the white Procession, Olive-crown'd!
'To-day we purge the Farmer and the Field,
From Ills, O sylvan Gods, our Limits shield;
O let no Weeds destroy the rising Grain;
By no swift Wolf be the weak Lambkin slain.
Prosp'rous the Hind shall trust the teeming Earth,
And heap great Logs upon his blazing Hearth.'
Wine in our Festival its Part must play,
The tipsy Reel causes no shame To-day.
Sport on! Night yokes her Steeds; a golden Train
Follows in playful Dance the Mother's Wane;
Then Sleep comes silent, swathed in Wings of black,
And the vain Race of Dreams flits in his Track.

(ii. 1, tr. Grainger.)

Tibullus exhibits a certain mild enthusiasm for the deeds of his patron Messalla, and for the greatness of Rome:

GRAZE on the seven green mountain-sides, ye bullocks, while ye may,
For a mighty city soon will crown the slopes ye tread to-day;
Rome that shall rule the nations all—the stern decree is given—

Where'er on her fields glad Ceres looks from the azure heights of Heaven,
From where the sun at dawn of day leaveth his rosy pillow,
To where he laves his panting steeds in the Ocean-stream's cold billow. (ii. 5. 55, tr. Cranstoun.)

In love Tibullus shows sometimes a subdued desperation, sometimes a simple ardour. Nemesis was rapacious as well as fickle, but Tibullus is too tender and loyal to threaten for long, and indeed too sincere to pretend that he can hold out :

BE chaste my love, and let thine old nurse e'er,
To keep thine honour pure, around thee tread,
Tell thee sweet tales, and, by the lamp's bright glare,
From the full distaff draw the lengthening thread.
And when thy maidens, spinning round thy knee,
Sleep-worn, by slow degrees their work lay by,
Oh, let me speed unheralded to thee,
As though the gods had sent me from the sky !
Just as thou art, with ruffled locks astream,
And feet bare, run to meet me on my way !
Aurora ! goddess of the morning beam !
Bear, on thy rosy steeds, that happy day !
(i. 3, tr. Cranstoun.)

TO feel these racking tortures never more,
A stone on icy mountain-peak I'd be,
Or rise a rock where raving tempests roar,
Lashed by the breakers of the wrecking sea !
Now drear is day : more drear night's shadows throng ;
The hours are steeped in gall—her heart no bland,
Sweet elegy can move—no power of song :
Gold she demands with outstretched hollow hand.
I seek sweet access to my love in song ;
Ye Muses hence ! if strains avail no more :
Gold I must have by slaughter or by wrong,
Or lie in tears before her bolted door.

'Tis foreign gauds have spoiled the artless fair ;
Hence bolted doors and surly dogs have come :
But, bring an ample bribe, no guard is there—
No key withstands, the very dog is dumb.
But the true, generous maid, though old in years,
Shall be bewailed before the burning pile ;
And some old love-revering lover will
With annual wreaths her pillared tomb array,
And say, departing, ' Rest thee well and still,
Light lie the earth upon thy peaceful clay.'
Truth prompts my words : but what does that avail ?
Stern are HER laws, and they must now be mine :
My dear ancestral home I'll set to sale—
My household gods, my all, for HER resign.
Weird Circe's draughts, drugs of the Colchian queen [1]—
What herbs in Thessaly grow rank and tall—
If Nemesis will only smile serene,
And mix a thousand more, I'll drink them all.

(ii. 4, tr. Cranstoun.)

NE'ER to return to her how oft I swore,
But of itself my Foot returned once more.
Ere now in Death would I have ended Sorrow,
Hope ever bids expect a happier Morrow.
Hope feeds the Swain, to Furrows trusts the Corn,
Soon with great Usury from Earth reborn.
By Hope the fetter'd Slave some Comfort gains,
Sings at his Work, forgets his clanking Chains.
Hope promised you, you haughty still deny ;
Yield to the Goddess, cruel Fair ! comply.
Untimely Fate your Sister snatch'd away ;
Spare me, O spare me, by her Shade I pray !
Let her sleep well beneath the gentle Clay !
Else wet with Tears shall Garlands deck her Tomb ;
To her dumb Ashes will I weep my Doom.

[1] The Colchian queen is Medea.

No more! My Lady's bitter Grief recurs,
Those speaking Eyes upwelling Sorrow blurs;
I am not worth a single Tear of hers.

(ii. 6, tr. Grainger.)

Tibullus and Virgil both died in 19 B.C. DOMITIUS MARSUS, an elegist who survived them, wrote this epitaph:

THEE too, Tibullus, ere thy time hath Death's unfeeling hand
Dispatched to fare by Virgil's side to dim Elysium's land,
That none should be to plain of love in elegy's soft lay
Or in heroic numbers sweep with princes to the fray.

(tr. J. P. Postgate.)

Usually printed as the third book of Tibullus, there survive elegies by various poets, probably of the circle of Messalla. A certain Lygdamus (whom some identify with the freedman of Propertius, cf. p. 147) celebrates his love for Neaera. First comes the dedication, a dialogue with the Muses:

THY festal Calends, Roman Mars, are here,
Which to our ancestors began the year;
Presents in order due speed up and down
Among the streets and houses of the town.
Muses, what tribute shall Neaera cheer—
Neaera, dear if mine, if false, still dear?
'Beauty by song is won, and greed by gold;
New, worthy verses to her joy unfold.'
Go to her home, the dainty book bestow,
Allow no bloom away from it to flow.
She'll tell if her love 's still as mine, or wanes,
Or if her heart no thought of me retains.
First give her lavish greeting, as is meet,
And speak these words in accents soft and sweet;
'Thy brother now, thy husband that would be,
These humble gifts—accept them—sends to thee.
Dearer to him thou art, he swears, than life,
Whether to him thou'lt sister be or wife.

Better his wife ; hope of this name he'll save
Till death shall bear him unto Hell's wan wave.

(Tib. iii. 1.)

Lygdamus could describe beauty beautifully, as witness these pictures of his lady, and of a youth who appeared to him in a dream :

ON thy Calends hath my Ladye robed to pay thee honour due ;
Come if thou be wise, great Mavors, come thyself her charms to view !
Venus will excuse the treason ; but do thou, rude chief, beware
Lest thine arms fall in dishonour, whilst thou gazest on the fair.
In her eyes, whene'er her pleasure wills the hearts of gods to fire,
Lamps, a pretty pair, are burning, ever lit by young Desire :
Whatsoe'er the maid be doing, wheresoe'er her step she bends,
Perfect grace is shed around her, perfect grace in stealth attends.
Every heart is fired to see her, walk she robed in purple bright ;
Every heart is fired to see her, come she dressed in snowy white ;
If she leave her tresses flowing, grace o'er flowing locks is pour'd ;
If she braid them, in her braidings is she meet to be adored.

(Tib. iii. 8, tr. A. Holmes.)

NO fairer form was ever seen by man in days of yore,
No home of heroes ever nursed a lovelier son before ;
Down his long neck played locks in ringlets all unshorn, while breathed
Of dripping Syrian dew those locks with myrtle interwreathed.
Face fair as Luna's—colour as snow a-gleam with purple light,
Like blush upon the bride's soft cheek when the bridegroom meets her sight,
Like amaranths 'mong lilies white which maiden hands have twined,
Like as when Autumn ruddies o'er the apple's waxen rind.

(Tib. iii. 4, tr. Cranstoun.)

Except that Lygdamus aspires to lawful marriage, his ideals are much like those of Tibullus :

THAT through the lengthening years joys ever might
Be ours in unison vows I did pay :
That, pillowed on thy lap, in age's night
I might at last serenely pass away ;
When, measured out life's all of flickering light,
My naked spirit must o'er Lethe stray.
(Tib. iii. 3, tr. Cranstoun.)

At the end of the book are some poems of Cerinthus (perhaps to be identified with Cornutus, a friend addressed by Tibullus in two poems) and of SULPICIA, the niece of Messalla (?). The lady exhibits a sincerity more frank than modest :

YES : love has come ; and, sooth, 'twould be more shame
Blushing to veil it o'er, than tell my flame.
Love's queen has heard my Muses' fond request,
And brought and laid my lover on my breast.
O transport ! of my joys make those a list
Of whom 'tis said that they their own have missed.
To no sealed tablets would I trust my joy,
Lest any read my thoughts before my boy.
I love my fault ; I loathe to mask for fame ;
He 's worthy of me, I of him the same. (Tib. iii. 13.)

SEXTUS PROPERTIUS (*c.* 50–16 B.C.) may be regarded as the greatest poet of the three great elegists. His power of imagination and his depth of passion approach those of Catullus, but he lacks clarity and sustained excellence, and sometimes obtrudes his learning. Some of his lines are unforgettable, and he avoids Ovidian regularity in the couplet, so that the pentameter often is the culmination of his thoughts, rather than a subsidence from the dignity of the hexameter. He is a man of moods ; he reacts from triumph to melancholy ; he can pass from delicate romanticism to scurrilous abuse or to realistic sketches of low life. There is a lack of restraint in feeling and in language, which is at the same time a cause of weakness and of power. His great

inspiration was the woman he called Cynthia ; she was of the type of Catullus's Lesbia, though without her influence in political life. Of her he truly says

Cynthia was first, Cynthia shall be the end.

The poet gives an account of his tastes in beauty, and how she exemplified or defied them :

'TWAS not her face, though fair, so smote my eye
(Less fair the lily than my love : as snows
Of Scythia with Iberian vermil vie ;
As float in milk the petals of the rose) ;
Nor locks that down her neck of ivory stream,
Nor eyes—my stars—twin lamps with love aglow ;
Nor if in silk of Araby she gleam
(I prize not baubles) does she thrill me so
As when she leaves the mantling cup to thread
The mazy dance, and moves before my view,
Graceful as blooming Ariadne led
The choral revels of the Bacchic crew ;
Or wakes the lute-strings with Aeolian quill,
To music worthy of the immortal Nine,[1]
And challenges renowned Corinna's skill,
And rates her own above Erinna's line.
I marvelled once that Troywards Helen's eyes
Drew Europe's might and Asia's martial pride :
Thou, Paris, Menelaus, thou wert wise,
Thou, quick to claim—thou loath to lose thy bride.
For one so fair Achilles well might die ;
For her e'en Priam must have sanctioned arms :
But he who'd all of pictured Eld outvie,
Should paint my darling in her native charms.
To West, to East, her likeness let him show—
'Twill set the East, 'twill set the West aglow.

(ii. 3, tr. Cranstoun.)

[1] i. e. the Muses.

WHY to walk forth, sweet life, thy tresses braid ?
Why in the Coan garb's thin folds array'd ?
Why with Orontes' myrrh imbue thy hair ?
Thy beauty's price enhance by foreign ware ?
Trust me, thy face wants no cosmetic's aid ;
Love's naked god abhors the dressing trade :
O mark what hues the lovely earth displays,
How of themselves best climb the ivy-sprays,
How in lone caves arbutus lovelier grows,
Through untaught channels how the streamlet flows ;
The beach beguiles us gemmed with native stones,
Sweeter for lack of art the wild bird's tones.

(ii. 2, tr. Nott.)

From the first his mistress kept the poet in fear of rivals. He indulged in a somewhat noisy outburst of triumph when she finally refused to go with a praetor to Illyria :

SHE'LL stay ; she 's sworn she will not go : ye envious, burst with spleen !
My pleadings and unwearied prayers have won me back my queen.
To her I'm dear, and Rome she calls earth's dearest spot, for me,
And, from my side, she'd scorn the pride and pomp of royalty ;
With me she 's ne'er been covetous, nor fled my circling arms,
Won by nor gold nor Indian pearls, but by song's gentle charms.
Apollo 's then a lover's aid, and maids of might the Nine ;
Now I can tread heaven's starry floor—by day, by night she 's mine :
My rival cannot lure my love to break her plighted vow ;
This glory, 'mid the snows of age, will mantle round my brow.

(i. 8, tr. Cranstoun.)

Sometimes it is the thought of death that saddens the poet, as in these ' professions of unalterable attachment ' (Nott) :

CYNTHIA, I dread not now the dreary tomb,
Nor on the pyre to pay the debt of doom,
But lest, perchance, thy love should die with me
This fear is worse than death itself can be ;
'Mong shades I'll thine be called for evermore :
Great love o'erpasses e'en the fatal shore.
And though thou liv'st through long and weary years,
Yet shall thy dust be greeted by my tears.
Oh might thy lifelong love mine ashes bless !
Then death were reft of all its bitterness ;
Yet how I fear my tomb thou'lt disregard,
And Love estrange thy heart—for Love is hard—
And sternly make thee dry the trickling tear !
His ceaseless threats make truest maidens veer.
So, while we may, love's pleasures let us prove :
Eternity is all too brief for love.

(i. 19, tr. Cranstoun.)

Even ' one of his most triumphant paeans over sensual delight ' ends on a note of gloom :

O BLISS ! O dazzling night ! O couch thrice dear,
From love-delights that all past joys outshone !
What charming prattle when the lamp burnt clear !
What loving dalliance when the light was gone !
While fate allows, let love delight our eyne ;
A long night comes and no returning day.
Oh, would that Love around us both might twine
A clasping chain that would endure for aye !
Be doves our model, whom love's bonds retain,
Who each with each are utterly made one ;
He errs who seeks love's frenzy to restrain :
No bounds are set where true love's course we run.
Sooner shall earth with false fruit mock the swain,
Sun drive Night's steeds, the rivers backward flow,
Than I to other maid transfer love's pain :
Hers will I be in life, and hers below.

If nights like this she grant me e'er again,
A single year will be an age to me ;
If many such, I'll be immortal then ;
E'en one gives mortal immortality.
Were Love and Wine life's work, nor ships, nor swords,
Nor bones by Actian billows tost we'd rue ;
Leave not life's joys while yet the light affords ;
A world of kisses is a world too few.
For as the leaves from withered garlands fall
And scattering float in cups, so we, who bloom
In love to-day, to-morrow may be thrall
To ruthless fate, and prisoned in the tomb.

(ii. 15, tr. Cranstoun.)

His expressions of optimism are transient :

HIS fated death none but the lover knows,
He fears not arms, nor any wind that blows.
Though 'mid the Stygian reeds he sit afloat,
And watch the dismal sails of Charon's boat,
Let whisper of his girl's cry call him back,
He will retrace the unpermitted track.

(ii. 27.)

A little allegory suggests by its playful tone that Propertius when he wrote it was ceasing to take his love so seriously :

MY love, as I was roaming late at night,
Wine-flushed, with not a slave to guide my way,
A group of urchins met me in my plight—
How many there might be I cannot say.
They all were naked. One, more rude than all,
Cried ' Seize him ! Well you know him ! He 's the dunce
The angry woman hired us to bemaul.'
He spoke ; a rope was round my neck at once.
One bids him drag me forth ; another shouts,
' Hang him ! He thinks we are not gods ! Ho there !

She 's waited hours for you, you lout of louts !
And you, the while, are staggering heaven knows where.
Spare, brothers, spare ; he swears he'll now be true.
And lo ! unto the very door we've come.'
My stripped-off garment then they round me threw,
And said, ' Go, learn to spend your nights at home.'

(ii. 29, tr. Cranstoun.)

His curses upon rivals or bawds are vigorous, but sometimes quaint rather than savage :

WITH thee, or with my rivals for thee, war
Truceless ! No peace for me when thou art near !
Rejoice no fairer maiden dims thy star :
Else wouldst thou grieve : thou'rt Queen of Beauty here.
And as for thee who wouldst my girl ensnare,
By thy wife's sire and mother be thou haunted !
If one night's stolen bliss has been thy share,
In wrath 'gainst me, not love for thee, 'twas granted.

(iii. 8, tr. Cranstoun.)

EARTH clothe thy tomb, foul bawd, with thorns around,
And may thy shade the thirst thou loathest bear,
Thy spirit rest not, and the avenging hound
Thy mouldering bones with hungry growlings scare !
She willed—the magnet steel no more could draw,
The birds, turned cruel, did their nestlings slay.
She plied her task with flattery, as doth bore
Through stony ground the patient mole its way.
Place an old crumbling jar above her bones,
Crush it, wild fig-trees, with what force ye can ;
Ye lovers, pelt her tomb with jagged stones,
And as ye pelt it curse the harridan.

(iv. 5, tr. Cranstoun.)

His renunciation of Cynthia reminds us of the farewells of Catullus to Lesbia :

TOO long I've been a theme and jest to all,
The witlings' butt, the laughter of the hall;
For five long years I've stooped to serve thee here—
Now bite thy nails and weep the bitter tear.
But weep in vain—too oft the trick 's been tried,
I know the fraud those treacherous tears can hide;
The tears I shed at parting soon shall dry,
'Tis thou hast snapp'd love's yoke by cruelty.
Let age with stealing march bid Cynthia bow,
And write its luckless wrinkles on her brow,
Then her grey locks in anger let her tear,
And weep before the mirror's chiding stare;
Be spurn'd in turn, and shiver in the cold,
And shrink beneath the taunts she launch'd of old.

(iii. 25, tr. C. R. Moore.)

But the 'snapping of love's yoke' is suggested more certainly than by these protestations. It was a care-free poet who sketched in the delicate mockery of this story:

SINCE she so often left me thus, and still abroad would range,
I thought I'd shift my camp and try another for a change.
On Aventine, near Dian's shrine, dwells Phyllis, who no doubt
Is dull when sober; in her cups she 's charming out and out.
There 's Teia in Tarpeia's grove, and prettier girl there 's none,
But then, when she is warmed with wine, she 's game for more than one.
Well, I resolved to ask them in, and spend with them the night,
In pleasure's bowers to cull the flowers and raptures of delight.
We sought a secret lawn; for three was set a sofa there.
Dost wonder how the trio sat? I sat between the pair.
When suddenly the door-posts shook, the hinges creaked, a din
Of whispered murmurs at the door, like some one coming in—
'Twas Cynthia! Bang the leaves went wide—it was no vain presage—

Not with her hair in neat array, but beautiful in rage.
She thrusts her wrathful nails in Phyllis' face ; while, wan with fear,
Loud Teia shouts, ' Help, murder, fire ! bring water quickly here.'
And when she'd tired her arms, and wreaked her vengeance to the dregs,
Poor waiter Lygdamus, who'd hid beneath the sofa's legs,
Is trundled out, and humbly sues for aid on bended knee.
' Poor Soul,' I cried, ' 'tis vain ; I'm but a captive here with thee.'
With suppliant hands I begged for peace, and, moved by slow degrees,
She proudly smiled to see me bend beneath her stern decrees.

(iv. 8, tr. Cranstoun.)

Yet he allows the ghost of Cynthia to prophesy that death will make them one again :

SO there *are* spirits, then, death ends not all,
But each wan ghost escapes the fiery pall ;
For o'er my bed, methought, hung Cynthia's shade,
Though Cynthia in her wayside tomb was laid.
Her bony fingers rattled in mine ear,
Though was her wrath still warm, her accents clear.
' False wretch, and false to others yet to be,
What power can sleep possess to solace thee ?
Yet though I might, I blame thee not, mine own,
Long in thy poems have I reigned alone.
I loved thee too ; if not, let vipers come,
To twine my bones and hiss above my tomb.
Burn every lay, each book that bears my name ;
No more to Cynthia's beauty owe thy fame.
And where soft apple-blossoms shade the stream,
And Anio's god bids bright the ivory gleam,
Set stone and write an epitaph to me,
Yet brief, that hasty travellers may see,

"In Tibur's earth here golden Cynthia lies,
New praise boasts Anio for so rare a prize."
By night we walk—night opes our prison-home,
Unlocks the hell-hound's bar, and bids him roam;
But back to Lethe's lake at dawn we fare,
And the grim ferryman recounts us there.
Another's now, ere long must thou be mine,
And bone with bone in grinding clasp shall twine.'

(iv. 7, tr. Moore.)

Propertius, like the other elegists, pronounced his dislike of war and business; the pictures he draws speak louder than argument:

SOLDIER from Tuscan ramparts wounded,[1] why,
When thou thy comrades' fate dost seek to fly,
At my groans turn'st thou swollen eyes to me,
Who lately shared the toils of war with thee?
Save thee, and joy to thy glad parents bear,
Nor to my sister let thy tears declare
That Gallus, 'scaped from Caesar's hostile bands,
Could not escape a nameless spoiler's hands;
So if on Tuscan hills some bones she see
She should not know those bones belonged to me.

(i. 21, tr. Cranstoun.)

SO, money, 'tis from thee life's troubles spring!
Through thee before our time death's path we tread;
To human vices sternly pandering,
Of cares the fosterer and fountain-head!
Thou whelmedst Paetus in the raging tide,
What time to Pharian[2] ports he sailed away;

[1] Lucius, brother of Marcus Antonius, stirred up war against Octavian in 41 B.C., and was defeated at Perusia in Etruria, probably not far from the native place of Propertius, who represents his kinsman Gallus as speaking.

[2] Pharos was the lighthouse of Alexandria.

For, following thee, he sank in youth's first pride,
And now he floats, to distant fish a prey.
No mother there earth's holy dues could pay,
Or lay with kindred dust the last of thee;
Now o'er thy bones the sea-birds linger aye,
For tomb thou hast the whole Carpathian sea.
Can anchor hold whom home has failed to keep?
What merits he who can his land despise?
The winds will all thy gains and treasures reap;
No ship grows old: the very harbour lies.
To snare the trader Nature smoothed the main:
Thou'rt lucky if but once success be thine;
Caphareus dashed the conquering prows in twain,[1]
When reeled wrecked Greece athwart the trackless brine.
But if, content to plough his father's field,
Paetus had weighed my words of warning well,
His roof-tree now a welcome guest would shield,
Poor, but on land unswept by tempest fell.
Out by the roots his nails by waves were torn;
With gasping mouth he gulped the hateful brine;
On one small plank drear night beheld him borne:
To crush him did so many ills combine.
With tears he poured this plaint—his latest prayer—
Ere the dark billow choked his dying breath:
'Ye dread Aegean gods! ye winds of air!
And waves that downward drag my head to death!
Ye tides! O bear me to Italia's shore;
Enough if but my mother find my clay.'
Sucked down by eddying waves he spake no more—
These his last words and that his latest day.
North wind, against my sails thou ne'er shalt roar;
Adventuring naught I'll lie at Cynthia's door.

(iii. 7, tr. Cranstoun.)

[1] Caphareus was a promontory in Euboea, where the Greek fleet was wrecked after the Trojan war.

Propertius has painted one fairy picture which shows the treatment of mythology at its best, and in unwonted restraint suggests Greek ideals. He tells how Heracles lost Hylas during the voyage of the Argonauts :

THE unconquered hero's favourite onward sped
To seek a far-secluded fountain-head
Him the twin-brothers, Boreas'[1] wingèd brood,
Zetes and Calais eagerly pursued—
Strove on poised wings his upturned face to kiss
And fled alternate with the ravished bliss :
Now hid he 'neath their wings upraised in air,
And with a bough drove off the wily pair.
Soon Orithyia's sons let Hylas roam :
Ah woe ! he sought, ah ! sought the wood-nymphs' home.
Over a spring dew-nurtured apples smiled
On trees untended in the woodland wild ;
Around the watered mead white lilies grew,
With poppies intermixed of scarlet hue.
With tender nail he culls them, happy boy !
His task forgot—a flower his only joy.
Now o'er the fount the reckless youth delays,
And in the glassy pool his form surveys ;
Now dips his urn to fill it to the brim,
His right arm leaning on the mossy rim.
That snowy shoulder then the Naiads fired :
They left their dances, and his charms admired ;
Then gently drew him down the yielding wave,
As prone he bent—a scream poor Hylas gave.
Afar Alcides answered, but there came
From the far founts nought save the echoed name.

(i. 20, tr. Cranstoun.)

Propertius wrote two imaginative addresses of wives to husbands, of which the first may have suggested to Ovid the form of his Heroides, while the second deals with historical characters :

[1] Boreas, the North wind, carried off the Athenian princess, Orithyia.

TO my Lycotas now I send this line,
If one so oft away can still be mine.
Is this the bridal joy thou vow'dst to me,
When first I yielded my young love to thee?
On all the gates the gods my vows have spurned;
Four cloaks I've woven, and thou'st not returned.
They say thou'rt thin and pale: O may thy hue
To tender thoughts of me alone be due!
When eve leads on the dreary night for me,
I kiss the arms thou'st left, and think of thee;
Fret if the coverlet uneven go,
Or wakeful bird of dawn forget to crow.
On winter nights I ply for thee the loom,
Sew purple cloth; shall the sword be its doom?
From maps I learn a painted world, and tell
Where each remote barbarian tribe doth dwell.
With joy I hear my lap-dog Craugis whine:
Only she shares the bed that once was thine.
No love like wedlock's love can e'er endure,
'Tis Venus' self that fans a flame so pure.
O keep thy bridal troth without a stain!
Thus, only thus, I wish thee home again.

(iv. 3, tr. Cranstoun.)

O PAULUS! Vex my grave with tears no more;
No prayers unlock the portals of the tomb;
When once the dead have passed 'neath Hades' law,
Barred stand the adamantine doors of doom.
My life changed not: to slander gave no cause;
'Twixt wedding torch and death's torch did we dwell
Renowned; nature and birth gave me my laws;
No fear to greater virtue could compel.
My meed—a mother's tears, the city's moan;
Even great Caesar's grief championed the dead;
His daughter by her sister-peer left lone,[1]

[1] Cornelia, who speaks, is half-sister to Julia, daughter of Augustus. This princess had not yet achieved notoriety.

We saw that by a god tears could be shed.
Be sons' sons pillars of our line; the boat
May now put forth; many shall swell my fame;
A wife's last triumph, and of fairest note,
Is praise's incense offered to her name.
Paulus, our pledges I commend to thee;
Burnt in my bones still breathes a mother's care;
Discharge a mother's duty, then, for me;
For now thy shoulders all the load must bear.
Kiss them, and kiss them for their mother; dry
Their childish tears; thine all the burden now.
And if thou grievest, let them not be nigh,
Or with a smile thy sorrow disavow.
Enough that thou the weary nights shouldst moan,
And woo my semblance back in visions vain;
And whisper to my portrait when alone,
As if the lips could answer thee again.
If e'er these halls should own another queen,
And a new mother should usurp my bed,
My children, ne'er let frowning look be seen,
But honour her your father chose to wed.
So shall your manners win her tender grace,
And surely she will love for love return;
Nor praise too much your mother to her face,
For fear her breast with jealous feelings burn.
But should my image still his thoughts engage,
And Paulus dower my dust with love so rare,
O learn to watch your father's failing age,
And shield his weary widowed heart from care!
Heaven add to yours the years I hoped in store,
And may your lives my aged Paulus cheer!
'Tis well: I ne'er the robes of mourning wore,
And all my children gathered round my bier.

(iv. 11, tr. Cranstoun.)

PUBLIUS OVIDIUS NASO (43 B.C.–A.D. 18) is the most fertile of the elegiac poets. He used the metre for didactic purposes in the 'Calendar' (see pp. 123 ff.), 'Art of Love', 'Cures of Love', and 'Cosmetics'; he tells of love in his 'Amours' and 'Heroines'; and he turns to lamentation in his 'Sorrows'. Much of his fame rests on his hexameter work, the Metamorphoses (see pp. 242 ff.), but the skill in story-telling and description there displayed is found in his elegies too. Ovid wrote with uncanny facility, and this sometimes betrayed him into petty cleverness and conceits. Quintilian stiffly sentences him as 'too much in love with his own genius', and as 'praiseworthy in parts'. He has not the imaginative power of Propertius; his clear-cut pictures lack the mysterious glamour of Virgil; his flippancy contrasts strongly with the sincerity of his predecessors. Yet it is a relief to turn from morbid egotism to a liveliness that refuses to take itself or others too seriously. If Corinna (of the 'Amours') is a lay figure, she figures in many lifelike pictures. If diffuseness mars the tales of love, it plays round true insight and good psychology. Even the poems of exile are illumined by flashes of spirit. Ovid would have been better company than any other Roman poet except Horace.

Among his earlier works were the imaginary letters of 'Heroines'. Here is a scene that Penelope describes to Ulysses:

THE Greeks are home, their leaders free from toil;
Our country gods receive the foreign spoil.
Brides bring thank-offerings for their lord's return
And smiling watch the altars brightly burn,
Hanging entranced upon their husband's lips
As he narrates proud Ilion's eclipse,
While elders stern and trembling girls enjoy
To hear his story of the fall of Troy.
Then dinner done he draws a battle plan
And shows how this affray and that began,
Wetting his finger that some drops of wine
May Troy and all her citadels design. . . .
But what avails that Troy has been dethroned
And that her walls are levelled to the ground,
If a war widow still I lonely stay,

And my dear lord is ever far away! . . .
For me alone Troy's battlements remain;
All other women have their men again.

(*Heroides*, 1, tr. F. A. Wright.)

Very real pathos is shown in the letter of Canace, daughter of Aeolus, to her brother Macareus, who had 'loved too well'. But in the Odyssey the King of the Winds is said to have given his six daughters as wives to his six sons:

HIS little Grand-child he commands away,
In desert Place to Dogs and Birds a Prey.
The Babe cry'd out, as if he understood,
And begg'd his Pardon with what Voice he cou'd.
Out went the King; my Voice its Freedom found,
My Breasts I beat, my blubber'd Cheeks I wound.
And now appear'd the Messenger of Death,
Sad were his Looks, and scarce he drew his Breath,
To say, 'Your Father sends you'—(with that Word
His trembling Hands presented me a Sword:)
'Your Father sends you this; and lets you know
That your own Crimes the Use of it will show.'
Too well I know the Sense those Words impart:
His Present shall be treasur'd in my Heart.
For thee, poor Babe, what Crime could they pretend?
How could thy Infant Innocence offend?
A Guilt there was; but Oh that Guilt was mine!
Thou suffer'st for a Sin that was not thine.
Yet long thou shalt not from my Arms be lost,
For soon I will o'ertake thy Infant Ghost.
But thou, my Love, and now my Love's Despair,
Perform his Fun'rals with paternal Care.
His scatter'd Limbs with my dead Body burn,
And once more join us, in a little Urn.
If on my wounded Breast thou drop'st a Tear,
Think for whose sake my Breast that Wound did bear;

This for thy Sister, too well lov'd, fulfil;
Myself will I perform my Father's Will.

(*Heroides*, XI, tr. Dryden.)

Ovid paints a charming picture of Leander's famous exploit of swimming the Hellespont to visit Hero (it should be noted that some of Saltonstall's rhymes are surpassed in quaintness only by the cuts wherewith his translation is adorned. Various alterations have seemed advisable, not only here, but also in some of the other translations):

BUT since both wind and seas deny to me
My passage, think how I first came to thee.
The Moon did yield a glimmering light to me,
Which all the way did bear me company.
I looking on her said, 'Some favour have
Towards me, and think on the Latmian Cave.[1]
A mortal's love made thee come from thy spheare,
And she I love is like a goddess fair,
For none unlesse that she a goddess be
Can be so vertuous and so fair as she.
For as thy silver beams do shine more bright
Than lesser stars which yeild a dimmer light:
So is she fairest of fair womankind:
Cynthia, if thou dost doubt thy light is blind.'
No noise nor voice unto my ears did come,
Only the water's murmur as I swom.
Only the Halcyons for loved Ceyx' sake[2]
Seem'd through the night some sweet complaint to make.
But when I saw thy Torch O then quoth I,
'Where that fire blazeth, my fair love doth lye.
For in that same shore,' said I, 'doth she shine
Who is sole goddess, fire and flame of mine.'
These words to my Arms did such strength restore,
Methought the Sea grew calmer than before;
Hot in my eager breast love did me keep,

[1] A reference to Endymion.

[2] Refers to a legend of the kingfishers.

Lest I should feel the chill of the cold deep.
But when I could by thee discernèd be
Thou gav'st me courage by looking on me.
Then to please thee, my Mistress, in thy sight
I spread my arms abroad and swim with might.
And though thy Nurse restrain'd thee, thou didst run
Down to the shore, nor e'en the waves didst shun ;
Embrace and kisses didst thou share with me :
Kisses, ye gods, worth seeking o'er the sea.

(*Heroides*, 18, tr. Saltonstall, 1672.)

If we turn to Ovid's own experiences in love, we find delightful accounts of the arts of woman :

WHILE thou dost lèad thy verse to Achilles wroth,
And new sworne chiefs in maiden armes dost clothe,
Wee, Macer, sit in Venus' slothful shade,
And tender love hath great things hateful made.
Often at length, my wench depart I bid,
She in my lap sits still as earst she did.
I said it shames me : halfe to weping framed,
' Aye me,' she cries, ' to love why art ashamed ? '
Then wreathes about my necke her winding armes,
And thousand kisses gives, that worke my harmes :
I yeeld, and back my wit from battells bring,
Domesticke acts, and mine own warres to sing.
Yet tragedies, and scepters fild my lines,
But though I apt were for such high deseignes,
My Mistris' deity did draw me fro it,
And Love triumpheth o'er his buskind Poet.

(*Amores*, ii. 18, tr. Marlowe.)

This lively flirtation at the races seems founded on experience :

I SIT not here the noble horse to see,
Yet whom thou favourst, pray may conquerour be.
To sit and talke with thee I hither came,
That thou maiest know with love thou mak'st me flame.

Thou viewst the course, I thee: let either heed
What please them, and their eyes let either feede.
In vaine why flyest backe? force conjoynes us now:
The place's lawes this benefit allow.
But spare my wench thou at her right hand seated,
By thy side's touching ill she is entreated.
And sit thou rounder, that behind us see,
For shame presse not her backe with thy hard knee.
But on the ground thy skirts too loosely lie,
Gather them up, or lift them loe will I.
Envious garments so good legges to hide,
To see the more—you envious wraps I chide.
Ere these were seene I burnt: what will these do?
Flames into flame, flouds thou pourest seas into.
Yet in the meane time wilt small windes bestowe,
That from thy fanne, mov'd by my hand may blow?
Or is my heate of minde, not of the skie?
Is 't woman's love my captive breast doth frie?
While thus I speake, blacke dust her white robes ray:
Foule dust, from her faire body go away.
Now comes the pompe: themselves let all men cheere:
'Tis time to shout; the golden pompe comes heere.
First Victory is brought with large spred wing,
Goddesse come here, make my love conquering.
Souldiour applaud thy Mars: no warres we move,
Peace pleaseth me, and in mid peace is love.
Thee gentle Venus, and thy boy that flies
Child archer, praise we: ayde my enterprize,
Let my new mistris graunt to be beloved.
She beckt, and prosperous signes gave as she moved.
What Venus promis'd, promise thou we pray,
Greater than her, by her leave th' art, I'le say.
Thy legges hang down, thou maiest, if that be best,
A while thy tiptoes in the grating rest.
Now greatest spectacles the Praetor sends,

Fower-chariot horses from the list's even ends.
I see whom thou affectest : he'll subdue,
The horses seeme as thy desire they knewe.
Alas he runnes too farre about the ring,
What doest ? thy wagon in lesse compasse bring.
What doest unhappy ? her good wishes fade,
Let with strong hand the left reine tight be made.
A fool we favour, Romans him revoke :
And each give signes by casting up his cloake.
They call them back ; lest their gownes tosse thy haire,
To hide thee in my bosome straight repaire.
But now again the barriers open lye ;
And forth the gay troupes on swift horses flye.
At last now conquer, and out-runne the rest :
My mistris' wish confirm, and my request.
My mistris hath her wish, my wish remaine :
He holds the palme : my palme is yet to gaine.
She smilde, quicke eyes did speake what may be guesst ;
For here enough ; render elsewhere the rest.

(*Amores*, iii. 2, tr. Marlowe.)

In A.D. 8 Ovid was suddenly banished to Tomi. Partly he owed this to his licentious writings, which mocked the reforms of Augustus, but the emperor had as his immediate pretext the implication of Ovid in some court scandal. We see the poet's house during his last night in Rome :

AH ! when I think of that last fatal eve
When all the joys of Rome I had to leave,
When I recall that cruel, cruel hour,
E'en now adown my cheeks the tear-drops pour. . . .
And 'twas my task to choose the serving train
Who should attend my exile o'er the main.
But my poor heart was numbed with long delay,
I could not think nor count each passing day,
No gold had I prepared, no raiment for the way.

Of all my friends but one or two had come
To say farewell ere I should leave my home.
My loving wife with cruel grief distressed
Clasped me still mourning to her mourning breast. . . .
Women and men and even children weep
And every corner seemed its tears to keep.
In truth, if we may match the small and great
So Troy appeared when at the open gate
The Greeks came storming in and Ilion knew her fate.

(*Tristia*, i. 3, tr. F. A. Wright.)

Ovid tells of the climate of his place of exile on the Black Sea:

THE snow lies deep: nor sun nor melting shower
Serves to abate the winter's icy power.
One fall has scarcely come, another 's there,
And stays in drifts unmelted all the year.
Fierce and tempestuous is the North-wind's sway;
It levels towers of stone and carries roofs away.

With skins and trousers men keep out the cold;
Naught but their faces can your eyes behold.
Into one mass their hair is frozen tight,
Their beards with hoary rime hang glistering white.
Nor need they jars their liquor to confine,
They do not quaff a cup, they break a bit of wine.

(*Tristia*, iii. 10, tr. F. A. Wright.)

It was literature that sustained the exile, and we find in Ovid a great deal of neat literary criticism. An allegory represents his divided allegiance (he did write a tragedy on the theme of 'Medea'):

AN old wood stands uncut of long yeare's space,
'Tis credible some godhead haunts the place.
Heere while I walke hid close in shadie grove,
To find what worke my muse might move I strove.
Came Elegie with coiled lockes perfumed sweete,
And one, I think, was longer of her feete.

Then with huge steps came violent Tragedie,
Sterne was her front, her cloake on ground did lie.
And first she sayd: 'When will thy love be spent?
Thou clingest ever to one argument.
Now give the Roman Tragedie a name,
To fill my lawes thy wanton spirit frame.'
The other smilde, (I wot) with sidelong eyes,
Erre I? or mirtle in her right hand lies.
'With heavy wordes,' she sayd, 'stout Tragedie
Why treadst me downe? must thou aye heavy be?
I, poet, of thy mind the seeds first knew,
To me thou ow'st it that she doth thee sue.'

(*Amores*, iii. 1, tr. Marlowe.)

He is conscious of the immortality of the poet, and appreciative of his predecessors and friends:

ENVY, why twit'st thou me, my time 's spent ill?
And call'st my verse, fruits of an idle quill?
Or that (unlike the line from whence I sprung)
War 's dusty honours I pursue not young?
Or that I study not the tedious laws;
And prostitute my voice in every cause?
Thy scope is mortal; mine eternal fame:
Which through the world shall ever chant my name.
Homer will live, whil'st Tenedos stands, and Ide;
Or, to the sea, fleet Simois doth slide:
And so shall Hesiod too, while vines do bear,
Or crooked sickles crop the ripened ear.
Callimachus, though in invention low,
Shall still be sung: since he in art doth flow.
No loss shall come to Sophocles proud vain.
With sun, and moon, Aratus shall remain.
Whil'st slaves be false, fathers hard, and bawds be whorish,
Whil'st harlots flatter, shall Menander flourish.
Ennius, though rude, and Accius high-reared strain,

A fresh applause in every age shall gain.
Of Varro's name, what ear shall not be told?
Of Jason's Argo? and the fleece of gold?
Then shall Lucretius' lofty numbers die,
When earth, and seas in fire and flames shall fry,
Tityrus, Tillage, Aenee shall be read,
Whil'st Rome of all the conquer'd world is head.
Till Cupid's fires be out, and his bow broken,
Thy verses (neat Tibullus) shall be spoken.
Our Gallus shall be known from east to west:
So shall Lycoris, whom he now loves best.
The suffering plough-share, or the flint may wear:
But heavenly poesy no death can fear.
Kings shall give place to it, and kingly shows,
The banks o'er which gold-bearing Tagus flows.
Kneel hinds to trash: me let bright Phoebus swell,
With cups full flowing from the Muses' well.
Frost-fearing myrtle shall impale my head,
And of sad lovers I'll be often read.
Envy, the living, not the dead, doth bite:
For after death all men receive their right.
Then, when this body falls in funeral fire,
My name shall live, and my best part aspire.

(*Amores*, i. 15, tr. Ben Jonson, *The Poetaster*, 1. i.)

He combines literary appreciation with the traditional lament of elegy in an exquisite dirge for Tibullus:

IF Memnon,[1] if Achilles, drew, when dead,
A Goddess-mother's tears, sad Elegy!
Thy undeserving tresses loosely spread,
For now indeed thy name shall suited be.
The poet of thy art—thy glory burns—
Tibullus' breathless body loads the pyre:
Love breaks his bow, his quiver downward turns,

[1] Memnon, son of Eos, the Dawn, was slain by Achilles, son of Thetis. Paris, aided by Apollo, mortally wounded Achilles.

And sees his torches dim their deaden'd fire ;
And droops his wings, and smites his bosom bare ;
Tears dew his ringlets ; sobs convulse his frame ;
So from thy roof he pass'd, Iulus[1] fair !
When Venus' other son his last road came.
Nor less was Venus by the bard's death moved,
Than when the wild boar rent her lover's[2] thigh ;
Yet bards are sacred deem'd, of heaven belov'd :
And some believe us fill'd with deity.
Officious death e'en sacred things profanes
O'er all alike his darkening hands are spread :
Maeonides,[3] whose founts' perennial strains
Bathe every poet's lip, sang and is dead.
Him did Avernus in its gulf immerse ;
His strains alone elude the greedy pile :
The toil of Troy endures in glorious verse,
And web unravell'd by the nightly wile.
Thus Nemesis, and Delia thus, shall live :
Who first and last Tibullus captive led :
Ah ! nymphs ! what aid can past devotions give ?
Egyptian timbrels, and a lonely bed ?
When fall the good, I doubt, (my weakness spare)
That there are gods in heaven ; alike our doom ;
Live pure, though pure, ye die ; to shrines repair,
Death from the temple tears you to the tomb.
Or go : let faith be placed in moving strains ;
Behold Tibullus on his death-pile burn !
Scarce of that graceful form and mind remains
Enough to fill the hollow of an urn.
Love's queen, that on Sicilia's mountains reigns,
Turn'd her soft eyes away, and drop'd a tear :
Yet better this than if Phaeacia's plains[4]

[1] Iulus was son of Aeneas, who was, by Anchises, son of Venus the mother of Cupid. [2] Adonis. [3] Homer.
[4] Tibullus had been very ill in Corcyra.

Had heap'd their dust upon thy unknown bier.
Here did a mother close thy fading eyes,
And to thy ashes the last offerings bear;
Hither a sister came, in mourning guise,
And, unadorn'd, tore loose her streaming hair.
With thy dear kindred Delia too was seen,
The former object of thy tender fire;
And Nemesis, who thy last love had been,
Her kisses mingled, nor forsook thy pyre.
Delia departing murmur'd: 'Bliss was thine
And thine was life, when I thy flame was known;'
But Nemesis, 'Why at my loss repine?
The "dying, faltering grasp"[1] was mine alone.'
But if of mortal natures aught remain,
Beyond an empty name, and flitting shade,
Tibullus now has joined the blissful train;
E'en now he wanders in Elysium's glade.
Thou, skill'd Catullus! shalt the meeting give,
Thy arm within thy Calvus' arm entwined:
While ivy sprays, that ever verdant live,
With flowering wreath thy youthful temples bind.
And Gallus, thou, if false th' accuser's tale.
Unstain'd with treason 'gainst thy prince and friend,
Thou, prodigal of bleeding life! shalt hail
Tibullus, as his steps to meet you wend.
With them thy shade shall haunt, if shade there be,
Accomplish'd poet! added to the blest.
Sleep safe in quiet urn: oh peace to thee!
Light may the turf upon thy ashes rest!

(*Amores*, iii. 9, tr. Sir Charles Elton.)

Ovid may bid us farewell in a letter sent from exile to Perilla, a poetess, whom some believe to have been his daughter.

[1] A reminiscence: cf. Tibullus, 1. i. 36, p. 133.

GO thou my letter, being writ so fast,
And to salute Perilla make thou haste.
What ere she does, when she knows thou art there,
She'll ask thee why thou'rt come, and how I fare ;
Tell her I live, but wish I did not so,
Since length of time can never heal my woe.
Returned to Muses that have been my curse
I make my words to fit alternate verse.
And ask, ' Dost thou to tasks we shared resort,
And sing songs, though not as thy father taught ?
First to the Muses' spring to lead was I,
Lest thy fair rill should perish and run dry.
But I do fear that since I am orethrown,
That now thy breast is dull and heavy grown :
For, while I might, thy lines and mine I'd read,
Me as thy Judge and Master thou didst heed ;
And to thy Verses I an ear would lend,
And make thee blush when thou didst make an end.
Yet now perhaps it may be thou dost shun
All books, because my ruin thence was won :
Fear not Perilla, so thy Poems prove
Nor man nor maid can learn from them to love :
Old age will lay its hand upon thy grace,
Old age which cometh on with noiseless pace.
They'll say, " This one was fair," a grief 'twill be,
And thou wilt plain thy glass doth lie to thee.
All things are subject to mortality
Except the mind and ingenuity.
For though my country, friends, and home I've left,
And all things took from me that could be reft :
Yet still my Muses do with me remain,
And Caesar cannot take away my vein.
Who though he should me of my life deprive,
Yet shall my fame when I am dead survive.

While martial Rome from her sev'n hills surveys
A world subdued, mankind shall read my lays.'

(*Tristia*, iii. 7, tr. Saltonstall.)

Ovid died in exile, and with him died elegy, killed by his facile fertility. He had lost the simplicity of Tibullus; succeeding ages (though the attempt was rare) could not attain to his ease of style. Martial was a master of the metre, but his epigrams belong to a different class of literature. Yet 'the sweete wittie soule of Ovid lives in mellifluous and hony-tongued Shakespeare', his name lives as he prophesied, and with every renaissance he is reborn.

DRAMA

THE history of Rome's dramatic achievement illustrates both her indebtedness to Greek literary guidance and the characteristic emergence of her own national qualities. Without Greek culture the native elements of drama at Rome could hardly have found literary expression. Roman *gravitas* gave the new birth a healthy constitution to resist the danger of dilettantism.

Germs of dramatic performance are first found in the rough country mummings which in Italy, as in Greece, celebrated the safe-gathering of harvest or vintage.[1] Closely connected with these were the 'Fescennine[2] verses', a sort of impromptu dialogue, cast in rough metrical form, in which the crude 'vinegar'[3] of Italy sharpened broad repartee and rustic banter. Fescennine licence, tolerated in the country, came into early conflict with authority in the town,[4] where, as Horace tells us, its point-blank personalities led to disorder and the breaking of heads.

> SO laws were passed with penalties and pains
> To guard the lieges from abusive strains,
> And poets sang thenceforth in sweeter tones,
> Compelled to please by terror in their bones.
>
> (*Ep.* II. i. 152–5, tr. Conington.)

Humbled, but not suppressed, the Fescennines continued to find favour with the Roman youth. The note of personality was not

[1] Cf. Virgil, *Georgics*, ii. 380 sqq., and Tibullus, II. i. 50–6.

[2] Supposed (on the analogy of the Atellane, see p. 167, n. 6) to be connected with Fescennium, a small town in Etruria. Another derivation, also ancient, connects the word with *fascinum* (=the evil eye), which it was desired to avert at a moment of apparent success. But there are philological objections to this latter view.

[3] Horace (*Sat.* I. vii. 32) uses the phrase 'Italian vinegar' to describe the mordant wit of the country-side.

[4] For the orthodox Roman view of personalities on the stage, cf. Cicero, *de Republica*, IV. x: 'Our life and character should be submitted to the sentence of judicial tribunals, and not to the whims and fancies of comic poets.'

entirely silenced. Personal ridicule [1] obscene enough, but good-natured, persisted in the 'Fescennine jests' at weddings and triumphs.[2]

Native farce at Rome—if Livy can be trusted—arose from the union of the Fescennines with Etruscan pantomime. The evidence is a disputed chapter from Livy,[3] describing the first appearance in Rome of professional players. This innovation, it is somewhat surprising to find, was due primarily to the exigencies of religion. The ordinary stock observances failing to alleviate a severe pestilence in the City, recourse was had to novel expedients, including 'scenic representations' which Livy describes as being dances to the music of the flute (though without words), performed by *histriones*, professional dancers imported from Etruria. This example, Livy states, incited the young nobles of Rome to combine burlesque imitations of the Etruscan dances with the dialogue and gesture of the old Fescennine.

These semi-dramatic productions, improved on the formal side but still plotless,[4] became an established diversion performed in time by professional actors. Livius Andronicus (*c.* 284–204 B.C., see p. 16) was the first to break away from their traditional inconsequence and to compose and produce at Rome the first plays with a coherent plot.[5] In consequence of this advance the young folk, finding that dramatic composition was becoming an 'art' too specialized for their powers, 'left the regular acting to the professionals and began to improvise comic verses'.[6] These were subsequently known as *exodia* (after-pieces).[7] They

[1] A supposed prophylactic—at times of rejoicing—against the 'evil eye' or jealousy of the gods. The use of the Fescennine on these occasions has been thought to point to its connexion with *fascinum*.

[2] References to this custom at weddings abound, from Catullus (*fl.* 65 B.C.) to Claudian (*fl. c.* A.D. 390). For its use at triumphs, cf. the coarse verses chanted by the soldiers of Julius Caesar (Suetonius, *Julius*, c. 49, § 4, and c. 51).

[3] Under the year 364 B.C. (Livy, vii, c. 2). Livy's story lacks the support of other evidence. Some critics see in it the invention of a learned antiquarian, anxious to square the development of Comedy at Rome with that of Comedy in Greece as traced by Aristotle in the *Poetics*. The theory has its difficulties (cf. D'Alton, *Horace and His Age*, pp. 255–67).

[4] Livy, *loc. cit.*, has caused some confusion by using the term *satura* of these performances. Probably he uses it in the sense of 'jumble' or 'medley' (cf. *lanx satura* = 'a dish full of various ingredients'), and not as a term for a specific genre of drama called *Satura*. See p. 281, n. 1.

[5] See p. 171.

[6] Livy, *loc. cit.*

[7] i. e. short epilogues to larger pieces.

resembled, and were presently fused with, the 'Atellane Plays',[1] amateur farces which recall the modern harlequinade both in their informality and their stock characters. The latter were usually four in number—Maccus (The Clown), Pappus (The Old Dotard), Bucco (The Glutton), and Dossennus (The Cunning Old Hunchback). The Atellane was worked up into some sort of literary form by Novius and Pomponius[2] about 90 B.C. The few extant fragments of their work are insufficient even for an outline of these farces. We may guess at their general character from the titles which survive, e.g. *Maccus Miles* (Maccus 'joins up'), *Maccus Agricola* (Maccus turns Farmer), *Pappus Praeteritus* (Pappus Bottom of the Poll), *Maccus Virgo* (Maccus as Maid). Other titles suggest that the authors amused themselves and their audience by poking fun at the habits of provincials and even by burlesque[3] of serious or tragic subjects.

The Atellane continued to flourish intermittently until about the end of the first century A.D., though its claim to favour as an 'occasional piece' was contested by the Mime. The Mime appears to have been introduced from Magna Graecia, originally as 'a *ballet divertissement*, without song or dialogue'.[4] In its Italian form it developed into a short 'knock-about' farce, of a licentious order. A typical theme was the trickery employed by the artful lover to conceal from the doltish husband his misconduct with the faithless wife.[5] While it bore a resemblance to the Atellane, it differed in several particulars. No masks (such as were necessary for the stock characters of the Atellane) were worn, and the actors performed without shoes.[6] The absence of these encumbrances made for greater agility and a freedom of gesture and grimace which, with the sprightly musical accompaniment, gave warmth and gay vigour to

[1] From Atella in Campania, whence these 'Oscan farces' were supposed to have come. These were the only dramas in which a Roman citizen could take part without loss of status; cf. the story of Laberius, pp. 169–70.

[2] Cf. Merry, *Fragments of Roman Poetry*, pp. 187–95.

[3] Here there was Greek precedent in the ἱλαροτραγῳδία (='mythological travesty in tragic form') of Rhinthon of Tarentum (*c.* 300 B.C.). The Amphitryon of Plautus (see p. 198) is perhaps an imitation of this kind of composition, known to the Romans as *fabula Rhinthonica*.

[4] See Merry, p. 237.

[5] Compare Ovid's description, *Trist.* ii. 497 ff., and cf. S. G. Owen, *P. Ovidi Nasonis, Tristium Liber Secundus*, Clarendon Press, 1924, pp. 264–6.

[6] They were known as *planipedes* ('flat-feet'). Comic actors wore the *soccus* (=loose slipper).

the performance. Stock-characters were the husband, the rival, the wife, and the pert lady's-maid who wore a short mantle (*ricinium*[1]). The two latter parts were played by women.[2] A further distinction was that the Mime was more a drama of the town, the Atellane of the country.

In its literary form the Mime seems to have come into prominence in the time of Sulla (*c.* 90 B.C.) and to have received its most polished treatment at the hands of D. LABERIUS, a Roman knight (*c.* 105-43 B.C.), and PUBLILIUS SYRUS (*fl. c.* 50 B.C.). Little remains of the latter's work except for a collection, drawn from the Mimes, of some 700 pithy saws. There is a sagacious, rule of-thumb morality about them to show that, in Syrus's hands at any rate, there was 'an undercurrent of something better' in the Mime.[3] Two characteristic examples may be quoted:[4]

Fortune 's like glass, most brittle when most bright

and

A remedy for all your wrongs—forget them!

(tr. Dimsdale.[5])

Over forty titles survive to prove that Laberius widened the range of subject and did not hesitate to trespass on the preserves both of Comedy and of the Atellane. His homely trenchancy[6] may be sampled in the expression

I fell in love like a cock-roach into a basin;

his humour in the picture of the thin-shanked fuller[7] treading cloth in the water:

What 's here?

A man, think you, or Balearic crane?

[1] Hence the alternative title of the Mime—*fabula riciniata*.

[2] In this respect the Mime differs from all other Roman stage-productions. It was the one form of drama in which women acted.

[3] Merry, p. 250.

[4] The Latin originals of these and the following quotations are to be found in Merry's *Fragments of Roman Poetry*, unless another source is indicated.

[5] *Hist. of Latin Literature*, p. 77.

[6] Aulus Gellius (*c.* A.D. 170) censures him for introducing 'a low and ignoble Latinity' (*Noctes Atticae*, XIX. xiii. 3, cf. *ib.* XVI. vii. 1).

[7] The fullers were a favourite butt, both of the Atellane-writers, e. g. Novius and Pomponius (see Merry, pp. 188 and 192), and of the comedians (see e. g. *ib.*, p. 105).

Both Laberius and Syrus figure in an incident, the recollection of which by a late antiquary[1] supplies our longest extant fragment of Laberius. In 45 B. C. Caesar, nettled by Laberius's outspoken political references, compelled him to act in one of his own Mimes[2] in competition with Syrus.[3] Laberius, in a dignified prologue, protested against his treatment.

> AFTER a life of sixty years unstained,
> I left my house a Roman knight, but must
> Go home a mummer. Certes, this same day
> My life has grown to be a day too long.
>
> (tr. Wight Duff.)

Later on, he was not afraid to aim some two-edged shafts at the dictator,

> Truth, citizens, we're forfeiting our freedom

and

> He whom the world fears needs must fear the world.
>
> (tr. Dimsdale.)

Caesar awarded the prize to Syrus and restored his rank to Laberius, who on his part accepted defeat with a good grace, remarking that after all the old order must yield place to the new.[4]

Mimes continued to be written and acted in Imperial times.[5] By concessions to popular taste and sentiment they succeeded in driving from the stage the legitimate drama of Tragedy and Comedy to which originally they had been introduced as make-weights, whether as 'curtain-raiser' or 'after-piece'. How far they can be classed with the Atellane as a native achievement is, with the scanty materials at our command, difficult to decide. The fact remains that in their developed form both Mime and Atellane owed much to Greece for subject-matter and technical treatment. What is Roman in them is the clowning fun and the

[1] Macrobius (*c.* A.D. 380), *Saturnalia*, ii. 7.
[2] Laberius would thus lose his status as a citizen.
[3] Who had been a slave. An added indignity for Laberius.
[4] Merry, p. 241.
[5] Leading writers of Mimes in later days were Catullus (not to be confused with the lyric poet) and Vergilius Romanus, mentioned respectively by Juvenal and Martial, and by the younger Pliny.

reflective morality of which from time to time we gain glimpses. In Tragedy and Comedy proper the obligation to Greece is easier to recognize. There is more evidence to guide us and the debt is frankly acknowledged.

Livius Andronicus[1] has already been mentioned as the first writer to stage (in 240 B.C.) Latin plays[2] with a consecutive plot. The occasion of these pioneer performances was the peace-celebration after the First Punic War.[3] In the plays (which were rough adaptations from the Greek) Livius made the first crude attempt to follow the original metres and reproduce them in Latin.[4] In place of the chorus he established behind the scenes a professional singer, who chanted to a flute accompaniment lyrical interludes, known as *cantica*, the actor on the stage meanwhile delivering the appropriate gestures. Livius may therefore claim to be the originator of a Graeco-Roman drama. From the meagre fragments, tragic and comic, little can be gathered of its general character. The bulk of the work seems to have been a bald imitation of the Greek with here and there a happy line.[5] Perhaps our sense of loss is somewhat tempered by our knowledge that Cicero, for all his admiration of the earlier Latin poets, did not consider the plays of Livius ' worth a second reading '.[6]

[1] See p. 167. He was a ' semi-Greek ', probably captured and brought to Rome after the siege and capture of Tarentum (272 B.C.). His first name suggests that he acted as tutor in the household of a Livius, whose children he is supposed to have taught. It was for their benefit probably that he translated the *Odyssey* (see p. 16) as well as specimens of Greek Tragedy and Comedy.

[2] It is convenient here to distinguish the various terms applied to Latin plays. The term *fabula palliata* (from *pallium*, the Greek dress) is used to denote Latin Comedy with Greek scenery and Greek characters. Latin Comedy, the scene of which is laid in Rome, is known as *fabula togata* (from *toga*, the national dress of Rome). Latin Tragedy, dealing with a theme drawn from Roman history or legend, is known as *fabula praetexta* or *praetextata* (from *toga praetexta*, the purple-hemmed *toga* worn by Roman magistrates). *Fabula crepidata* (from *crepida*, the high buskin or boot worn by tragic actors) denotes a Latin Tragedy with a Greek theme and setting.

[3] Observe once more the close relation which existed at all times between the State religion and the stage. Four festivals in the Roman year (together with religious celebrations, such as triumphs and funerals) were the occasions regularly appointed for dramatic performances.

[4] For his *Odyssey* on the other hand he had used the native Saturnian metre (see p. 16).

[5] Even Horace—by no means a sympathetic critic (cf. p. 368)—admits that there were *occasional* good lines (*Ep.* II. i. 69–75).

[6] *Brutus*, 18.

A more significant and more interesting personality than Livius is his younger contemporary CNAEUS NAEVIUS (*c.* 270–199 B.C.), whose first play was staged in 235 B.C. Here again few fragments survive, though enough to form some notion of his lively, independent character.[1] A phrase from one of his tragedies suggests an eye for the beauties of nature :

Leaf-laden haunts,
Where nature's hand, not man's, doth sow the trees.

Another was quoted effectively against Antony by Cicero : [2]

Ill-gotten gain
Is soon ill-spent.

Two of the surviving titles suggest that Naevius was the first to compose *fabulae praetextae*,[3] a departure in which, as in his choice of subject for an Epic,[4] he shows considerable originality. The following couplet, from one of these plays, suggests the force of public spirit in him.

TELL me whence this all-puissant people totters to decay ?
'Tis our new-hatch'd brood of statesmen : ill-experienc'd they.

The audience can hardly have failed to catch in these words an echo of contemporary party-politics. For Naevius, unlike either Livius or Ennius, was—in all probability—a Roman by birth, a plebeian who could criticize the nobility, even Scipio himself, fearlessly and relentlessly. The story of his 'altercation' with

[1] Here must be stated a difficulty which confronts us at all turns in dealing with the Roman dramatists. The Comedies of Plautus and Terence and the tragedies of Seneca alone survive tolerably complete, the remains of other playwrights exist only in isolated fragments. A few passages of purely literary interest have been saved by such genuine lovers of literature as Cicero, many appear only in the pages of later grammarians, and there solely to illustrate some grammatical eccentricity or some debated point of antiquarian interest. It is obviously no safe or easy task to estimate the literary, still less the dramatic, value of writers whose works are handed down to us by so haphazard a chain of transmission.

[2] *Philippic*, ii. 27.

[3] See p. 171, note 2.

[4] For his Epic, see p. 17.

the Metelli is familiar. Naevius had hinted that it was not altogether merit which made the Metelli consuls :

Fate makes Metelli magistrates of Rome.[1]

The Metelli retorted with a Saturnian verse :

The consuls will make trouble for Naevius the poet.[2]

The upshot was that Naevius found himself in prison.[3] Even this did not crush his spirit, though his fate served as a warning to successors and probably accounts for the fact that Roman Comedy did not again attempt political personalities in the manner of the Old Attic Comedy.[4] It was in Comedy[5] that Naevius was most at home, and it is in his comic fragments that we find some of his most defiant utterances :

I'll loose lots o' liberal language at the Liberalia ![6]

and the following, a protest to the people against his treatment by the nobles,

WHAT in the theatre wins me folks' applause,
Shall any great man dare to interfere with ?
Good God, 'twere better *here* (*sc.* on the stage) to be a slave
Than to live free as liberty 's now reckon'd !

As a piece of observant description lightly handled, his picture of the flirt at the games (in the *Girl from Tarentum*) could hardly be bettered.

[1] An iambic line. Note the *double entendre* in the word ' Fate ' which may mean *mere chance* or *misfortune*, in this context ' *our* misfortune '.

[2] There is a somewhat similar ambiguity in the reply. The word *malum* with which Naevius is threatened means ' trouble ', but suggests the ' whipping ', the punishment of slaves.

[3] Plautus alludes to this ; see p. 196.

[4] A field in which ' Italian vinegar ' would surely have excelled itself ! As it was, Satire took over the place intended by nature for a Roman Comedy of Invective. Cf. p. 281.

[5] Sedigitus places him third in his ' canon ' (p. 356). The epithet which he bestows—' *burning* Naevius '—is a fair description of the poet's ' fiery ' character.

[6] Notice the extreme alliteration. *Libera lingua loquemur ludis Liberalibus !*

LIKE a shuttle-cock she flutters, backwards, forwards, here and there,
Nodding, winking and caressing, making lovers everywhere.
She 's at home with all the youngsters, flirts with all, flies to and fro,
Sits by one and fires his passion, squeezing hand and tangling toe :
Shows her ring to one to gaze at, blows a kiss to one above :
Sings with one, with one exchanges cabalistic signs of love.

In the end Naevius's enemies proved too strong for him. The old poet died an exile at Utica in or about 199 B.C. An epitaph, thought to be his own work and written in Saturnians, proudly claims that after his death 'men at Rome forgot to speak the Latin tongue'.[1] Certainly among Roman poets, as his Epic proves, he has a conspicuous claim to be remembered as a pioneer and a patriot. In Comedy his immediate successor is Plautus (though in view of the outspoken character of Naevian Comedy it would be truer perhaps to say Lucilius,[2] the satirist), in Tragedy—as in Epic—Q. ENNIUS (239–169 B.C.).[3]

Ennius is known to have attempted Comedy though apparently without much success.[4] His temperament found a more congenial outlet in his adaptations from Greek Tragedy,[5] mostly from the drama of Euripides. The fragments of one play—a version of Euripides's *Medea*—show by comparison with the original Greek that in one play, at least, he followed his model very closely. The main difference is that between the two languages. The Greek is compressed and flexible, the Latin dignified but prolix. But careful examination of his tragic remains as a whole establishes an original and personal factor. Ennius himself claimed to have three 'hearts',[6] the Oscan (from his South Italian birthplace), the Greek (from his education), and the Roman (from his adopted city). These sources are

[1] Merry, p. 223.
[2] See pp. 281 ff.
[3] See pp. 18 ff., 130, 282.
[4] He appears tenth—and last—in Sedigitus's list (p. 356).
[5] He is credited with only one *praetexta*—a drama on *The Rape of the Sabine Women*.
[6] To a Roman the breast is the seat of the intelligence. A 'hearty man' (*cordatus homo*) is not therefore an unintelligent one.

mingled in his work. The Greek gives it refinement, form, and polish (as shown in his improvement of metre and dialogue), the Roman imparts a moral and sententious colouring. To the Italian [1] perhaps are due the moments of strong and convincing emotion which sometimes flash out in Ennius. Take, for instance, the lyrical passage in which Alcmaeon, having murdered his mother, appeals to Arsinoe for help against the Avenging Deities,

THEY come, they come—the Furies wreak [2]
On me their vengeance, me they seek,
Foul fiends! (*To Arsinoe.*) Ah! lend thine aid!
With flame-borne pow'r they torture me.
Dark forms and snake-girt locks I see,
And blazing brands—oh agony!
Save, save me, dearest maid!

Or the lament of the captive Andromache over the fall of Troy,

WHERE turn for help? Whence seek support?
In foreign fastness refuge find?
What comfort claim, with woe distraught,
From home, from palace banish'd,
My father's altars undermin'd,
His house in ruins vanish'd?
Charr'd beam and sooted pile recall
The furious flame that foul'd yon temple-wall.
. . . . . .
O father! O my fatherland!
O royal house of Priam, King of Troy!
On every hand
The foreign host saw I
Thy fencèd keep draw nigh,

[1] Cicero (*De Div.* i. 31) praises Ennius for 'moral earnestness', certainly a *Roman* quality, and for his exquisite sensibility and passion—these, probably, *Italian* characteristics, to which the phrase of Scipio, his patron—*verses wrought in flame*—very likely refers.

[2] In this and the following passage notice the alliteration, difficult at times to represent in translation, but always a marked and effective feature of Roman poetry.

Thy gates on grating hinges roll'd,
Thy halls of ivory and gold,
Thy fretted roofs rich-wrought of old,
Thy palace to destroy;
I saw all perish in one blazing pile.
Of life perforce unlif'd,[1] the King
Sank to the ground and perishing
Jove's altar did defile.

Take again—for another effect—the opening scene of his *Iphigenia* where Agamemnon asks the sentry 'What of the night?'

AG. On heaven's high resonant shield o' nights upborne,
Watchman, is aught to see?

SENTRY. The Wain is up,
Driving the stars again and ever again
Night's dizzy path along.

(tr. Dimsdale.)

These lines, blending the Greek and Roman genius, achieve sublimity. In weaker hands they might have been bombast.

The literary quality of Ennius's tragedy is unchallengeable. Its dramatic power, as also that of his successors, Pacuvius and Accius, we are less able to judge. MARCUS PACUVIUS (*c.* 220–132 B.C.),[2] the nephew and literary heir of Ennius, endeavoured still further to enrich the diction of tragedy, in particular by the introduction of high-sounding compound words. His reputation has suffered by the preservation of some of the more violent compounds which he attempted to acclimatize.[3] Such eccentricities occur in his description of dolphins as

The flock
Of Nereus, snout-uplifted, neck-inarch'd

(tr. H. E. Butler),

[1] A kind of play on words—a characteristic device in Ennius often crudely employed.

[2] See p. 281.

[3] Yet compounds were natural to the genius of the language (e.g. *Suovetaurilia*), were used effectively by the early lyric poet, Laevius (*c.* 90 B.C.), and by Catullus in his *Attis*, and persisted in the spoken tongue. Augustan purism banished them from the higher forms of literature (see p. 369).

or of the tortoise (an extreme instance of enigmatical ingenuity!) as

FOUR-FOOTED, slow-proceeding, country-bred,
Short-headed, snake-neck'd, scabrous, low: unflesh'd—
An animal inanimate, yet voic'd.[1]

Yet he could write simply and effectively in a descriptive passage. Witness the following account[2] of the start for Troy and the storm which burst upon the Greeks:

HAPPY when their fleet left harbour, they could watch the fish at play,
They were never weary watching, though they watched the livelong day.
Meanwhile when it turned to sundown, rough and rougher grew the main,
Darkness doubled, blinding blackness came with night and clouds of rain,
Flame flashed out across the welkin, thunder made the heavens rock,
Hail, with plenteous sleet commingled, sudden fell with headlong shock.
Everywhere the gales broke prison, cruel whirling winds arose,
And the ocean boiled in fury. . . .

(tr. Wight Duff),

and the lines immediately following,

The clash o' fleets,
Creaking gear and clamorous sailors, thunder-roll and whistling sheets.

[1] This refers to the legend of the infant Hermes who is said to have slain a tortoise and used its shell to construct the first lyre.
[2] Alliteration once more is prominent in the original.

He, too, can strike either the didactic chord, dear to Roman hearts,

> COMPLAINT of fortune best beseems the man,
> But lamentation were a woman's part;

or the equally popular political note,

> Saved I these men that they might murder me?

a line which was quoted with effect against the conspirators at the funeral of Julius Caesar.

Pacuvius, however, seems on the whole to have laboured under a pompousness, which made him the butt of Lucilius and of later writers such as Persius.[1] LUCIUS ACCIUS (170–86 B. C.)[2] was more successful in joining lofty[3] expression to the dignity of moral reflection and counsel, as in the hope of Ajax for his son:

> In worth match thou thy sire, outmatch his luck[4]
> (tr. Wight Duff),

or in the aphorism,

> True men bear their misfortunes easily.

There are suggestions of imaginative power in the passage describing the impression made on the minds of herdsmen (who had never before seen a ship) by the coming of the Argo,

> FROM the deep,
> Loud-echoing with strange, inhuman roar,
> So vast a bulk approaches; waves are roll'd
> Before it, whirlpools eddy in its wake,
> As forth it plunges, scattering the sea
> And breathing back the spray-drops.

Next a Virgilian touch, previously unexampled, in lines charged

[1] Cf. pp. 376–7. The 'Antiquated Author' there mentioned is Pacuvius.
[2] See p. 355.
[3] Horace (*Ep.* II. i. 56) speaks of his 'grandeur', Ovid (*Amores*, I. xv. 19) of his 'spirited tongue'.
[4] A passage interesting as the model of a famous Virgilian imitation (*Aen.* xii. 435–6).

with strong feeling for country life and understanding of its beauty and its hold,

BY chance, ere dawn, hot sunshine's harbinger,
When rustics drive the hornèd kine afield
To cleave with steel the dewy, steaming earth
And from the yielding furrow lift the sods. . . .
(tr. Dimsdale),

and passion, forcibly represented,

TEREUS with untam'd mood and ruthless heart
Look'd on her, frenzied with his flaming lust—
A desperate man : then of his madness shapes
A deed most foul.
(Ribbeck, *Trag. Rom. Frag.*, 1871, p. 218, tr. Wight Duff.)

A translation (from the opening lines of Euripides's *Phoenissae*) shows a growing tension of style by contrast with the diffuseness of Ennius :

SUN, who fierce heat and flashing flame unfold'st
From thy candescent car and hurrying steeds,
Why, inauspicious and ill-favouring,
Shedd'st thou thy light upon the Theban race ?

Lastly, we may notice an expression of contempt for current superstition : [1]

TRUST not augurs, who fill others' ears,
That their own houses they may fill with gold.
(Ribbeck, *op. cit.*, p. 157.)

After Accius Roman Tragedy wanes. The old plays continued to be performed even in Imperial times and the skill of actors like Roscius or Aesopus still drew popular applause, especially if the lines seemed capable of application to current politics. But during the last years of the Republic no new tragedian of real consequence appears.[3] The Augustan age seems to have witnessed something of a revival. Augustus himself not only

[1] Against which both Ennius and Pacuvius had already protested.
[2] The original passage plays on the sound of *aurum* ('gold') and *auris* ('an ear').
[3] Most of the new work seems to have been in the nature of a literary

composed an *Ajax*,[1] but bestowed handsome patronage upon at least one tragic writer.[2] Unhappily little is left to us beyond some names of authors and a few play-titles. Nothing remains from the tragedies of Asinius Pollius[3] (76 B.C.–A.D. 4), and we are therefore unable to determine the value of the eulogies which Horace and Virgil saw fit to confer upon their patron.[4] From Tacitus[5] we learn that the two most popular plays of the period were the *Thyestes* of Varius Rufus, the friend of Horace and Virgil, and the *Medea* of Ovid, both of which won the warm praise of Quintilian.[6] For the student of literary history the loss of the *Medea* is the more serious. It is at least doubtful whether the play was ever intended for stage-production.[7] And it is tolerably certain that its general style and treatment owed much to the training of the rhetorical schools.[8] With it we have lost an early example of the influence which the combined forces

exercise written without any idea of production. A typical example is that of Cicero's brother, Quintus, who wrote off four 'tragedies' within sixteen days.

[1] He was not satisfied with its style and destroyed it, remarking to his friends that 'Ajax had fallen on his sponge', i.e. not, as in the play, on his sword. (Suetonius, *Aug.* c. 85.)

[2] He presented Varius Rufus with 1,000,000 sesterces (=£10,000) for his tragedy, *Thyestes*, which was performed in 29 B.C. at the games given to celebrate the victory of Actium.

[3] For Pollio, see also p. 375, note 1.

[4] Cf. Horace, *Odes*, II. i. 10, and Virgil, *Eclogues*, viii. 10. Virgil hails him as the Roman Sophocles and Horace uses terms only less complimentary. Tacitus, however, tells us that he modelled himself on Accius and Pacuvius and implies that his compositions were 'stiff and dry'. (*Dialogus*, c. 21.)

[5] Tacitus, *Dialogus*, c. 12.

[6] *Inst. Or.* x. i. 98. He is even prepared to back the *Thyestes* against any of the classical Greek plays. This is high praise, even when allowance has been made for the unsoundness of Quintilian in matters of dramatic criticism.

[7] The plays of Pollio and Varius, of which performances were given, seem to have been written some years before the *Medea*.

[8] For Ovid's rhetorical training, cf. p. 246. Ovid's methods may be paralleled from another of his works. The *Heroïdes* (see pp. 153 ff.) are semi-dramatic monologues in which his taste for romantic psychology is freely indulged. But in form they are little more than versified 'deliberative' essays as practised in the rhetorical schools. From one of the two fragments of the *Medea*

> I had the power to save, and ask you then
> If I have power to ruin
>
> (tr. H. E. Butler).

we may infer that Ovid treated the theme on rhetorical lines. The epigrammatic turn of the sentence is quite in the Senecan manner.

of Recitation and Declamation [1] brought to bear upon literature as well as a valuable means of bridging the gap which separates the plays of the Republic from those of the Neronian age.

In the ten plays which have come down to us under the name of Seneca we possess our only complete specimens of Roman Tragedy. Nine [2] of them deal with the well-worn themes of Greek legend, and these are generally assigned—on the internal evidence of sentiment and style—to LUCIUS ANNAEUS SENECA, the philosopher [3] (*c.* 4 B.C.–A.D. 65).[4] For subject-matter, Seneca, in common with the earlier Roman dramatists, borrowed from one or more of the three great Athenian masters, from Euripides especially. But while Ennius, Pacuvius, and Accius had been content merely to translate or to adapt, Seneca went a good deal further. His method was to rewrite the plays according to the gospel preached in the declamation-schools of his own day. The result is a drama frankly rhetorical. In it the vices of rhetoric—its tiresome cleverness, its want of proportion, its diffuseness—are all paraded in their least attractive form. The cleverness is particularly noticeable in the dialogue. Senecan characters, regardless of sex, age, or standing, all conduct their conversation in the language of the declamation-hall. Quip calls to quip and epigram to epigram. Nothing is more typical of the Senecan manner than the rapid fusillades as two parties exchange a fire of glittering repartee. The duologue between Medea and her Nurse is but one example of this verbal musketry:

NURSE. MEDEA.

NURSE. Foster-child,
Restrain thy fury; hardly art thou safe
Though silent.

MEDEA. Fortune tramples on the meek,
But fears the brave.

[1] See the section on *Literary Criticism*, pp. 375–6.

[2] The tenth, the *Octavia*, is usually supposed not to be the work of Seneca. Its subject is the divorce and banishment of Nero's wife, Octavia, and it possesses interest as the only surviving example of a *fabula praetexta* or Roman historical drama. But neither its literary nor its dramatic qualities are convincing.

[3] The epigrammatic style of the plays and the constant intrusion of Stoic doctrine agree closely with the manner and spirit of the Moral Epistles (see pp. 336 ff., 480 ff.).

[4] See pp. 299 ff., 336 ff., 476 ff., 487.

N. When courage is in place
It wins approval.
M. It can never be
That courage should be out of place.
N. To thee,
In thy misfortune, hope points out no way.
M. The man who cannot hope should naught despair.
N. Colchis is far away, thy husband lost;
Of all thy riches nothing now remains.
M. Medea now remains! Land, sea, sword, fire,
God and the thunderbolt, are found in me.
N. The King is to be feared.
M. I claim a king
For father.
N. Hast thou then no fear of arms?
M. I, who saw warriors spring from earth?[1]
N. Thou'lt die!
M. I wish it.
N. Flee!
M. Nay, I repent of flight.
N. Thou art a mother.
M. And thou seest by whom.
N. Wilt thou not fly?
M. I fly, but first revenge.
N. Vengeance may follow thee.
M. I may, perchance,
Find means to hinder it.

(*Medea*, 157–73, tr. Harris.)

The wrangle between Pyrrhus and Agamemnon, in the *Trojan Women*, lends itself to a similar display:

[1] When Jason had sown the dragon's teeth, Medea helped him to destroy the armed host which sprang from them.

PYRRHUS. AGAMEMNON.

PYRRHUS. To grant kings life is kingly.
AGAMEMNON. Why didst thou
With thy right hand cut short a royal life? [1]
P. Mercy gives often death instead of life.
A. Mercy now seeks a virgin for the tomb? [2]
P. Thou deem'st it crime to sacrifice a maid? [3]
A. More than their children, kings should love their land,
P. No law spares captives or denies revenge.
A. What law forbids not, honour's self forbids.
P. To victors is permitted what they will.
A. He least should wish to whom is granted most.
(*Trojan Women*, 327–36, tr. Harris.)

Declamation is naturally prominent in the longer speeches, but they are more often tedious than effective. One reason is that Seneca, in true scholastic fashion, can resist no opportunity of airing his learning, mythological or otherwise. When Amphitryon [4] appeals on behalf of his step-son, Hercules, to Jupiter, we must needs hear the full tale of the Twelve Labours. Medea,[5] about to poison Jason's Corinthian bride, collects all the known poisons of the globe, and the Nurse supplies us with a neatly discriminated geographical list of each. But Seneca can commit even graver improprieties. Medea butchers her two sons openly and only wishes there were more of them:

Would that the children that made proud the heart
Of Niobe were mine, that I had borne
Twice seven sons! In bearing only two
I have been cursed!
(*Medea*, 954–6, tr. Harris.)

[1] Pyrrhus, son of Achilles, had murdered Priam after the fall of Troy.
[2] The ghost of Achilles had demanded the sacrifice of the Trojan princess, Polyxena, before the Greeks could sail from Troy.
[3] Agamemnon had sacrificed his daughter, Iphigeneia, in order to secure a passage to Troy for the Greek fleet, weather-bound at Aulis.
[4] *Hercules Furens*, 204–78.
[5] *Medea*, 705–38.

Manto,[1] the prophetess, examines the entrails in public and gives a minute description of each gruesome detail. Worst of all, perhaps, is Theseus, piecing together the mangled remains of his son Hippolytus :

What is this I see,
Lacking in beauty, base, with many wounds ?
What part of thee it may be I know not,
Yet part of thee it is. Here, here repose,
Not in thine own but in a vacant place.

(*Phaedra*, 1265–8, tr. Harris.)

Such scenes of horror [2] could hardly have been presented on the stage. Perhaps it was never the author's intention that they should. He may have regarded his plays, like his Moral Epistles,[3] as handy vehicles for his own ethical teaching. This supposition would account for the frequent irrelevance of the choruses, in which Stoic moralizing constantly prevails. A few typical lines may be quoted :

CHORUS. The sport of fate are we, yield then to fate.
Unquiet cares ne'er changed that distaff's thread.
Whatever we, the race of men, endure,
Whatever we may do, comes from above ;
Lachesis, with a hand that turns not back
Her distaff, spinneth out the thread of life ;
All walk a path prepared, and man's first day
Foretells his last ; not Jupiter himself
May make the spindle of the fates turn back ;
The order of her turning, fixed for all,
No prayers can change.

(*Oedipus*, 980–92, tr. Harris.)

Here we have one of the cardinal doctrines of Stoicism—the theory of an unalterable Fate. But it is a Stoicism too hard and too inhuman for ordinary acceptance. And it is precisely in its lack of humanity that Senecan drama fails to appeal. As

[1] *Oedipus*, 353–83

[2] This morbid passion for the unnatural may be paralleled from the routine of the declamation-schools (cf. Tacitus, *Dialogus*, c. 35, quoted on p. 386, and Petronius, *Satyricon*, § 1, quoted on p. 377).

[3] See pp. 480 ff.

in the schools of rhetoric, its characters are types ; not individuals. ' There is not a real human character in all the tragedies.' [1]

If Seneca's plays were not really written for stage-production, it would be idle to make too much of their dramatic shortcomings. And in Seneca's favour it should be said that there are some scenes of indisputable power. But the real significance of his work lies not so much in its own merits and defects as in its influence upon the early course of Medieval drama.[2] Seneca's plays came to light at an early stage of the Renaissance and long enjoyed general esteem as the authentic type of Classical Tragedy. In Italy, the first tragedy written in the vernacular is actually introduced by the ghost of Seneca.[3] In France, where ' classical ' drama was most at home, a whole series of dramas ' after Seneca ' was written, from the *Cléopâtre* of Jodelle (1552) onwards. Later, Corneille and even Racine were in his debt. The early English tragedy *Gorboduc* (1561) is a professed imitation of the Senecan manner. Kyd's *Spanish Tragedie* (*c.* 1584) borrows from almost all the plays. Sidney admired his style, Jonson translates passages from him for his own *Catiline* and *Sejanus*. Shakespeare may have known him in the complete translation published in 1581.[4] A debt indirectly due to Seneca may be noted in *Hamlet*. The Ghost is lineally descended from the Ghost of *Tantalus* in the *Thyestes*.[5]

Modern judges with a fuller knowledge of Greek tragedy and a better critical equipment are not inclined to set the same store by Seneca's plays as did the Middle Ages. Nor can it be doubted what Horace, Rome's premier dramatic critic, would have made of work so directly in conflict with his canons and his hopes. Horace had looked forward to a national drama,[6] a product more polished and more refined than the work of the Republican poets,[7] broader in conception and appeal, and above all original

[1] A. D. Godley, *Senecan Tragedy*, p. 241 in *English Literature and the Classics* (Clarendon Press, 1912), a brilliantly amusing sketch, well worth study.

[2] For a fuller account, see Professor J. W. Cunliffe, Introduction to *Early English Classical Tragedies*, Clarendon Press, 1912.

[3] Cammelli's *Filostrato e Panfila*, 1499. Cf. Cunliffe, *op. cit.*, pp. xxiv ff.

[4] *Seneca : His Ten Tragedies Translated into Englysh.*

[5] Cf. Professor C. E. Vaughan, *Types of Tragic Drama*, Macmillan, 1908, pp. 93 ff.

[6] Horace is nothing if not practical, and it is tolerably clear that his *Ars Poetica* aims at shaping the course of the Augustan revival of Tragedy.

[7] Cf. his strictures upon Ennius, Accius, and others. His insistence

in the sense that his own or Virgil's work was original. But even the Augustan revival failed to produce a tragic writer capable of holding the public interest. The Roman counterpart of Greek Tragedy was an ideal perhaps unattainable. Greek drama had flourished because of the freshness of its subject and the interpretation which it offered of the national life and religion. At Rome, themes from the Greek could not please as a novelty for ever, and the choice of a Roman motive was limited and difficult.[1] In such a soil Roman Tragedy could not be expected to develop a healthy, independent growth.

It has already been suggested that other comic poets could not afford to be so outspoken as Naevius.[2] Direct political allusion practically disappears in his younger contemporary, T. MACCIUS PLAUTUS (*c.* 254–184 B. C.), who came originally from Umbria.[3] All his comedies[4] are *palliatae*, professedly modelled on the Greek 'New Comedy',[5] and containing lively pictures of low life and intrigue. Plot and scene are Greek, the humour and sentiment almost entirely Roman. Jests at Roman institutions and Roman foibles are scattered about with as little care for consistency as Shakespeare had in a later age, or less. Delicate characterization becomes the broadest caricature, sensitive wit a boisterous humour too varied and too exuberant to be adequately conveyed in a few excerpts. But, even in excerpts and in translation, as in the passages which follow, it is best to make Plautus his own critic.[6]

notably in the *Ars Poetica*, on elementary dramatic principles implies that in his opinion Roman drama was still a mine unworked and capable of extensive exploitation.

[1] See Introduction (p. 8). Of the eighty or so play-titles of Ennius, Pacuvius, and Accius only four or five are *praetextae*. 'The reason probably is that there was too much party-life in Rome to make the dramatic treatment of the national history equally acceptable to all' (W. Peterson, *Quintilian*, Book X, p. 95).

[2] See p. 173.

[3] He was an actor in early life, lost his savings in imprudent speculation, and after a turn of manual labour took to writing plays for a living.

[4] Twenty survive, probably Varro's selection (p. 357, and note).

[5] The later Greek 'Comedy of Manners' (*c.* 340–260 B.C.), dramas of everyday life of which fidelity to nature and minute character-study are the leading features. The plot often depends on a happy recognition-scene in which the supposed slave-girl turns out to be an Attic citizen and is therefore able to marry her lover.

[6] Notice particularly his numerous assonances, alliterative effects, and puns.

In the first, two slaves are discussing the character of *Euclio*, the famous miser in the *Aulularia* or Pot of Gold : [1]

STROBILUS. ANTHRAX.

STR. A Pumice-stone is not half so dry as that old Huncks.

AN. Say ye so, introth ?

STR. Take this from me. If the least smoke shou'd chance to fly out of his House, he strait allarms the Town, exclaims against Heaven and Earth, that he 's undone, and ruined for ever !—I'll tell ye : whene're he goes to Bed he tyes a Bladder at his Nose.

AN. What for ?

STR. For fear of losing part of his Breath when he 's asleep !

AN. [*somewhat incredulous.*] And doesn't he plug up his Wind-pipe too, lest any shou'd steal out that way ?

STR. 'Tis civil to believe me, since I do you.

AN. Why, truly, I do believe ye.

STR. Did you never hear, how it goes to the Soul of him to pour out the Water he has once wash'd his hands in ?

AN. Do'st think, Boy, we shall be able to squeeze out a swinging sum of Money of this old Gripes, to purchase our Freedom with ?

STR. Troth, shou'd ye beg the loan of Hunger itself of him, the Wretch wou'd deny ye. Nay more ; whenever he gets his Nails to be cut, he carefully scrapes up all his Parings, and saves 'em.

AN. Why, faith, this is the most miserable Cur upon the face of the Earth.—But is he really such a pinching Wretch as you say ?

STR. Why t'other day a Kite chanced to steal a scrap of supper from him ; this poor Devil goes strait to my *Lord Chief Justice's*, crying, roaring, and howling for his Warrant to apprehend it.—O, I cou'd tell ye a thousand of these Stories, if I had leisure.

(*Aulularia*, Act II, Sc. 4, tr. Anon. 1694.)

[1] The seventeenth-century English translation quoted has some flavour of the old-fashioned Latin.

Euclio himself appears in the opening scene of the play. He has just been into the house to assure himself that all is well with his hidden treasure. *Staphyla* is the old house-keeper.

EUCLIO. STAPHYLA.

[*Re-enter Euclio from his house.*]

EUC. [*aside.*] Now I've found all well within doors, my mind 's a little at ease.—[*To Staphyla.*] Now come in, and keep House.

STA. What, for fear it shou'd be stolen away ? There 's no Plunder there for Thieves ; there 's nothing but Emptiness and Copwebs.

EUC. [*testily.*] I'll warrant ye, I must keep a House like an Emperor for your sake, you old Sorceress ? Huzzy, I'll have every Copweb taken care of and preserv'd. I'm very poor, I confess ; but I patiently bear what the Gods lay upon me.—Get ye in, and make fast the door ; I'll be back presently. Take a special care you don't let e're a Soul come within the doors.

STA. What, if they come to borrow Fire ? [1]

EUC. I'll ha' ye put it all out : If there be any now, out with't in an instant. Leave a Spark alive, and I'll quench every Spark of Life in ye. If they want Water, tell 'em the Pump is dry ; if they would borrow a Knife, an Axe, a Mortar, or a Pestle, as Neighbours us'd to do, tell 'em the House was robb'd, and they're all stolen. 'Slud, I'll ha' no body set a step within my House when I'm gone ; therefore if *Dame Fortune* her self shou'd come, I charge ye keep her out.

STA. Troth, you needn't fear her coming ; for were she at the Threshold, she'd ne're come in.

EUC. Hold your prating tongue, and get ye in.

STA. To please you, I'll do both.

EUC. And be sure you secure the Door with two great Bolts : I'll be here instantly.

[*Exit Staphyla.*]

[1] An excuse for a call familiar before the days of flint or matches.

O, I'm wretchedly perplexed that I'm forced to go out a doors now; and troth, it goes sore against my mind; however, 'tis upon sure grounds. For now 's the time for our Officer to distribute the Money to the Poor: Now if I shou'd be negligent, and not be among the Beggars, I'm afraid the World wou'd presently conclude, that I had got Gold at home. For 'tis n't likely such a poor Fellow as I pretend to be, shou'd so little value Money, as not to be there. Notwithstanding my restless care of concealing this Gold, it strangely runs in my Head, that all the World knows of it, and everybody seems to be more obliging, and to complement me more than ever. They meet me, stay me, embrace me, enquire after my Health, my Welfare, and every thing.—Well, I'll go, and be back again as soon as possibly. [*Exit to market-place.*]

(*Aulularia*, Act I, Sc. 2, tr. Anon. 1694.)

Here is a slave-dealer in trouble with a rascally cook,[1] a stock character.

BALLIO. CHEF.

BA. He calls it wrong who calls it mart for cooks;
A Thieves' kitchen; for hire not cooks but crooks!
CH. If what they say is your opinion,
What made you hire me?
BA. Dearth: there was but one!
But why did you sit there, if you're a cook,
Alone of all the lot?
CH. I'll tell you. Look!
Directly men would hire a chef, 'tis clearest
They never want the man who 's best and dearest;
The very cheapest rather they engage;
That is the reason why I held the stage.
Those beasts were shillingers, but as for me
No man can make me budge for less than three.

[1] Whom, in accordance with custom, he has hired for a special occasion from the 'Cooks' Market'.

I'm not like many a cook, when food I flavour,
Who piles the plates with mustard-fields for savour,
Banquets—the beef ![1] his craving never curbs
But seasons herbs with herbs and herbs with herbs !
Shreds garlic, fennel, leeks and corianders,
Beet, sorrel, broccoli and broad-beans squanders,
Dilutes with silphium a pound in weight,
Grates onions vile that th' eyes of those who grate
Turn ere they've grated tear-distilleries.
When such men cook or sauce their cookeries
They season not with any seasoning,
But rather with blood-suckers blood-sucking !
Of living guests the intestines to devour ;
That 's why man's life is only for an hour !

BA. And you ? The sauce you use is godlike then ;
By which the life of man you can prolong ?
What makes you say their seasoning is wrong ?

CH. Two hundred years their life (no need to quibble !)
Who nutriment that I have seasoned nibble.
For when I've shredded in some pickleoni,[2]
Some sauci-fly mosquito whacceroni,
All of themselves at once they're piping hot !
For Sea-sons[3] you must season thus the pot.
Land-sharks with castor-oil I castigate
Or paregoric-oil in sublimate.

BA. The Devil take you and your sauceries,
And all your damnable mendacities !
Was it for this to-day your fee you took ?

CH. Of course I own I am a costly Cook ;
But in return I make my pains appear
Wherever I am hired . . .

BA. To commandeer !

[1] *Banquets—the beef!* i. e. turns the guests into cattle by setting before them ' whole meadows ' of rough vegetables.
[2] The chef's condiments are of course comic formations.
[3] *Sea-sons*, i. e. fish, ' Neptune's cattle '.

CH. D'you think to find a Cook with scales and balance
Who has not, sharp as hawk or eagle, talents ?
BA. D'you think to go and cook at any house
Unless you sheathe your talons and cook . . . grouse ?
CH. Put a good face upon it.
BA. Prithee, how
Have you at home and a good face, man, say ?
CH. Because my broth will do for you to-day
As did Medea when she did Pelias down,[1]
Whose medicines and potions the old clown
Made, so 'tis said, a regular broth of a boy,
And so I'll do for you . . .
Maybe you don't believe me ?
BA. Too much talk !
Don't worry ; that 's my house ; now in you walk.
(*Pseudolus*, Act III, Sc. 2, tr. H. L. Rogers.)

The needy Parasite who sponges on the wealthy and tries to earn dinner-invitations by his wit or flattery is a favourite type with Plautus. Here is one who finding business bad resolves in desperation to hold an auction of his effects.

GELASIMUS.

GEL. Ah ! times are changed : that phrase we used to meet
Is out of favour now and obsolete :—
' Come, dine with me : please, do : now, no excuse !
You know I want you : sure, you won't refuse ? '
To-day they've found a substitute expression
That plays the very deuce with our profession :
' I'd simply love to dine you, if I might.

[1] ' Medea, by magic, restored Jason's father, Aeson, to youth. Promising to do the same for Pelias, Jason's enemy, she induced his daughters to begin the treatment by cutting him to pieces, whereat she neglected the case. The Cook plays on Ballio's ignorance, leaving him to draw his own conclusions as to what kind of ' broth of a boy ' he will make of him.
(Rogers and Harley, note *ad loc.*)

Fact is, old boy,—I'm out myself to-night.'
A pack of damn'd inhospitable fibs—
Which I'm for pulverising, neck and ribs ![1]
This cursèd stinginess is my undoin' :
I'm bad as bankrupt, faced with utter ruin.
Well, like you Romans when you ' take a tumble ',
I'll advertise the fact and sell[2]—your humble !
' Pray notice : all-important Clearance Sale !
Sad Business-Failure ! ' (that 's the usual tale).
' Fall-off in custom : Huge Depreciations
In breakfast, lunch and dinner invitations ! '
I'll be my auctioneer. ' All must be sold :
Vast Bargains offered : No Reserve : be bold !
Lot one, some stories. Bid up, gentlemen !
Who bids a supper ? [*pauses*] Who a breakfast then ?
[*To a spectator.*] You nodded, eh ? Here 's value quite unique :
No Parasite has better. [*To another.*] Did you speak ?
Lot two, Greek unguents : three, some pick-me-ups
(Handy, next day, for people in their cups).
Lot four—here, gentlemen, a choice collection—
Fibs, quibbles, compliments—his own selection.
Lot five—a food-tub, empty. Yes, that 's right—
The *very* thing for scraps—a Parasite !

(*Stichus*, Act I, Sc. 3 (somewhat shortened).)

The *Braggart Captain* or swaggering soldier has always been a favourite target for the shafts of Comedy. The following passages permit a glimpse at two of Plautine creation. Compared with the exploits of *Pyrgopolynices*,[3] the adventure of

[1] For this kind of humorous expression in Plautus, cf. *Stichus*, 436, where the slave given a ' free day ' says gleefully, ' I'll give this day *a fine dose of torture* ' (*hunc diem . . . probe excruciavero*).

[2] The auction-sale after bankruptcy. The word for Roman, here as often in Plautus, is *barbarus* (= foreigner), the Greek term which must have rung strangely in the ears of a Roman audience. In one passage (*Mostellaria*, 828) he calls his countrymen ' *porridge-eating* barbarians '.

[3] See passage on p. 194.

A scene on the stage, from a Vatican MS. of Terence (ninth century)
Adelphoe ll. 264–6

Photograph—Sansaini

Antamoenides with the 'flying men' seems a trifle tame and ordinary.

ANTAMOENIDES. LYCUS.

ANT. As I was telling you,
You rogue, of that same pentethronic fight;[1]
When in one day full sixty thousand men,
Ay, flying men, with my own hands I kill'd—
LYC. How? *flying* men?
ANT. Yes, I affirm it, Sir.
LYC. Are there, I pray, such things as flying men?
ANT. There *were*; but I have killed them all.
LYC. And how?
ANT. I'll tell you—I deliver'd to the legions
Birdlime and slings; and on each sling they laid
Some leaves of coltsfoot.
LYC. Why?
ANT. O, to prevent
The birdlime's sticking to the slings.
LYC. Proceed.
[*Aside.*] You lie with a good grace, by Hercules!
What then?
ANT. Some birdlime-balls of moderate size,
They put into their slings; then I gave order,
They on the flying men should be discharged.
In short, whome'er the birdlime hit, they fell
As thick as pears; and as each dropp'd, I strait
One of his feathers ran quite through his brain,
And kill'd him, just as you would kill a pigeon.

(*Poenulus*, Act II, Sc. 1, tr. Warner, 1772.)

Pyrgopolynices can improve on this performance. His portrait in fact is an almost too farcical burlesque of the type.[2]

[1] The 'pentethronic fight' is merely mythical.
[2] Contrast Terence's picture of a Captain and Parasite (quoted p. 202).

PYRGOPOLYNICES. ARTOTROGUS (*the Parasite*) *and Soldiers.*

PYR. [*To his soldiers.*] See that the splendour of my shield outshine
The sun's bright radiance, when the clouds are cleared:
That, when 'tis needed in the press of battle,
The foes' array be dazzled by its rays.[1]—
[*To himself.*] Fain would I comfort this brave blade of mine,
Lest he despond in spirit, or lament,
For that I wear him unemployed so long,
Who longs to slash to shreds and slay our foemen.[2]
[*Aloud.*] But where is Artotrogus?

ART. He is here,
Close by a hero fortunate and fearless,
And of a princely form,—a warrior! such
As Mars himself would not have dared to bring
His prowess in compare with your's.

PYR. [*Reminiscent.*] Who was it
In *Weevilonia's*[3] flat fields I spar'd,
Where *Battlebloodandblunderonides*,[4]
Great Neptune's grandson, bore the chief command?

ART. Oh, I remember—doubtless it is he
You mean to speak of, with the golden armour;—
Whose legions with your breath you puff'd away
Like the light leaves, or chaff before the wind.

PYR. O! that indeed! that on my troth was nothing.

ART. Nothing, 'tis true, compar'd with other feats
That I could mention,—[*aside.*] which you ne'er performed.
[*To audience.*] Show me whoever can a greater liar,

[1] *Array . . . rays.* Tyrrell's suggestion for a really bad pun. For a similar assonance, cf. ll. 7–8 'so *long*, Who *longs*'.

[2] A notably alliterative line. Alliteration predominates throughout the scene.

[3] Weevilonia. Comic place-name, coined from 'weevil'.

[4] The original has *Bumbomachides Clutomestoridysarchides*.

One fuller of vain boasting than this fellow
And he shall have me, I'll resign me up
To be his servant.

PYR. [*who has been strutting up and down the stage.*] Artotrogus!

ART. Here, Sir.—
[*playing up.*] How in the name of wonder, was't you broke
In India with your fist an elephant's arm?

PYR. How! *arm*?

ART. His *thigh*, I meant.

PYR. I was but playing.

ART. Had you put forth your strength, you would have driven
Your arm quite through his hide, bones, guts and all.

PYR. Hold,—what was I about to say?

ART. I know
What you design'd to say. A gallant action!
I well remember—

PYR. [*suspiciously.*] What?

ART. [*somewhat embarrassed.*] Er—what you did, Sir.

PYR. Hast thou got—

ART. [*anticipating him.*] Tablets? Yes, Sir, here—d'ye want them?—
A pencil too.

PYR. How rarely thou dost suit
Thy mind to mine!

ART. 'Tis fit that I should study
Your inclinations.

PYR. What dost thou remember?

ART. I do remember—let me see—an hundred
Turkutthroatanians—and thirty Sardians—
And three-score Macedonians,—that 's the number
Of persons, whom you slaughter'd in one day.

PYR. What 's the sum total of these men?

ART. [*promptly.*] Sev'n thousand.

PYR. [*calculating.*] So much it should be—thou'rt a right accomptant.

ART. I have it not in writing, but remember.
PYR. Thou hast an admirable memory.
ART. [*aside.*] 'Tis sharpened by my stomach.

(*Miles Gloriosus*, Act I, Sc. 1, adapted from Thornton's translation, 1769.)

Though Plautus does not, of course, draw all his characters on such extravagant lines as his Braggart Warrior or his Miser, it must be admitted that they do not rival the subtle consistency of Terence's. Nevertheless, his robuster methods do succeed in presenting a living individuality where the more artistic poet sometimes falls short of success. Plautus had evidently in mind a very vivid conception of *Palaestrio* when he wrote these lines.

PERIPLECTOMENUS.

[*Palaestrio, the slave, goes to the far end of the stage to meditate a plan. Periplectomenus watches.*]

PER. Look !—how he stands apart, with brow severe,
As wrapt in thought, and full of cares :—His hand
Knocks at his breast ;[1]—I fancy, he 's about
To call his heart out. See, he shifts his posture,
And leaning his left elbow on his thigh
The fingers of his right hand he employs,
As it should seem, in reckoning some account ;
And his right thigh he smites so vehemently,
As speaks him with his thoughts dissatisfied :
And now he snaps his fingers : how he 's worked !
And ever and anon he shifts his place :
See, see, he nods his head : he likes it not,
What he has hit upon ; for nothing crude
Will he at length bring forth, but well digested.
But see, he builds his head up, and his arm
Serves as a pillar to support his chin.
Fie, fie,—in troth I do not like this building ;
For I have heard a Roman poet[2] us'd

[1] *At his breast*—as being the seat of the intellect.
[2] *Roman poet*—the *barbarus poeta* is Naevius (see p. 173). One of the few contemporary references in Plautus.

To lean his head upon his elbow thus,
And in close custody he liv'd confin'd.
Bravo! O brave! how well he plays his part!
Ne'er will he rest, till he has perfected
What he 's in search of. Ah, he has it sure.
(*Miles Gloriosus*, Act II, Sc. 2, tr. Thornton.)

The normal plot of a Plautine comedy winds round the cunning tricks played by slaves upon their masters and round somewhat disreputable love-affairs. The latter at times involve the play in dialogue in which Plautine exuberance overflows more coarsely than amusingly. To this main type two plays stand out in strong contrast. The *Captivi*[1] or *The Prisoners of War* brings to light an undercurrent of serious morality faintly traceable in the more reflective passages of the other comedies. As the author himself says in the Epilogue,

GENTLEMEN, this play 's been written on the lines of modesty;
Here are found no wiles of women, no gay lovers' gallantry;
Here are no affiliations, and no tricks for getting gold;
No young lover buys his mistress whilst his father is cajoled.
It 's not often nowadays that plays are written of this kind,
In which good folk are made better. Now then, if it be your mind,
And we've pleased you and not bored you, kindly undertake our cause,
And to modesty award the prize with heartiest applause.
(*Captivi*, Epilogue, tr. Sugden.)

The hero of the play is the slave *Tyndarus*, who changes places with his young master and allows him thus to escape. Plautus gives us an affecting picture of the slave's loyal devotion.

TYNDARUS.

TYN. If not for sin I perish, I don't care!
But though I perish, and he breaks his word,
And doesn't come back here, my joy is this:
My deed will be remembered when I'm dead,

[1] It is the one play of Plautus in which there are no female characters.

How I redeemed my lord from slavery,
And rescued him and saved him from his foes,
To see once more his father and his home;
And how I rather chose to risk my life
Than let my master perish in his bonds.

(*Captivi*, Act III, Sc. 5, tr. Sugden.)

The *Amphitryo* is a sort of mythological travesty.[1] *Jupiter* disguises himself as *Amphitryon*, who is absent at the wars, and, accompanied by *Mercury*, disguised as *Sosia*, *Amphitryon's* servant, pays a secret visit to *Alcmena*. As a result of their union the infant Heracles is born. The real *Amphitryon* returns unexpectedly, and suspects his wife of infidelity. In the final scene, after much amusing by-play between *Mercury* and the real *Sosia*,[2] the truth is revealed, and the spectators are exhorted to 'give great Jove a clap'. No play of Plautus is harder to classify. The author himself called it a 'tragi-comedy'. Certainly there is real tragedy in the plight of *Alcmena* herself, the noblest woman that Plautus ever drew, and in her indignant remonstrance with her husband:

ALCMENA.

ALC. [*To Amphitryo.*] No such dowry did I bring you as most other women bring,
But a bosom free from passion and a modest heart and pure,
Fearing God, loving my parents, of my friends' affection sure,
Pliant to your will and bounteous in kind offices to you.

(*Amphitryo*, Act II, Sc. 2, tr. Sugden.)

A high ideal of womanhood is set forward in *Alcmena's* song[3] after the departure of the (supposed) *Amphitryo*:

[1] Cf. p. 168, n. 2.

[2] Plautus is a master of the situation produced by 'mistaken identity' (cf. the *Menaechmi* or 'Twin Brothers' on which Shakespeare's *Comedy of Errors* is closely modelled).

[3] The lyrical element in Plautus is very marked. All plays are divided into *diverbium* (the spoken part, in iambic metre without accompaniment) and *cantica*—the lyrical part, about three parts of the play, consisting of *cantica* proper (e.g. Alcmena's song) which was a musical monologue, and all scenes written in non-iambic metre, which were chanted—with gesture—to the music of the flute. The *cantica* thus comprise the *solo* and the *recitative*.

ALCMENA.

ALC. How few and how poor are the pleasures
That come in the course of our life !
Compared with the troubles ; for so 'tis
Ordained in this region of strife.
The gods have decreed it, that pleasure
Shall always be followed by pain ;
Nay, more inconvenience and trouble
Oft comes, when our wishes we gain.
And now that I've learnt by experience,
I find it is true in my case.
For a short time to me 'twas permitted
To gaze on my husband's dear face ;
Just one night he stayed ; then he hastened
And suddenly went ere the dawn ;
Yes, he whom I love more than all else
Is gone and has left me forlorn.
Less pleasure I felt at his coming
Than pain now that he is withdrawn.
Yet this makes me glad ; he has conquered the foe,
And home has returned with fresh laurels to show.
Yes, that is my comfort. Then let him begone,
So he may return when the victory 's won.
With a brave and a resolute spirit
His absence I'll bear ; then I'll see
My husband renowned as a conqueror ;
And that is sufficient for me.
For valour 's the prize of all prizes the best ;
There 's nothing like valour, it must be confest ;
Our freedom, our safety, our goods and our life,
Our home and our children it guards in the strife.
It comprehends all things, all blessings it showers,
If valour, true valour, is ours.

(*Amphitryo*, Act II, Sc. 2, tr. Sugden.)

Among several writers of *palliatae*, contemporary with Plautus, whose names are preserved, none is worthy of mention except Caecilius. An exception may be made in favour of AQUILIUS (*fl.* 174–154 B. C.) whose lines on a parasite were attributed to Plautus by so good a judge as Varro.[1]

PARASITUS.

PA. 'Od rot the knave who first invented hours
And introduced these curst chronometers—
Laying the day on the dissecting-table ![2]
When I was young, our bellies told the time—
Ay, kept it better and more accurately.
When did *they* ever bid us not to eat
Save when our fodder failed us ? Nowadays
We've food enough, yet wait and wait—for what ?
The sun's good pleasure, quotha ! All the town 's
Crammed with these crazy time-contrivances,
And most poor folk crawl dinnerless and dry.

CAECILIUS STATIUS (*c.* 219–166 B. C.), apparently a Gaul by descent,[3] occupies a position midway between Plautus and Terence. It is difficult to assess his work from the very few fragments which remain. The titles suggest that he followed Menander more closely than Plautus had done and thus stood closer to Terence. Sedigitus places him first in comedy,[4] Varro praises his management of plot,[5] Horace records the prevalent admiration of his ' force and weight ' (*gravitas*),[6] Cicero couples him with Pacuvius as a bad Latin stylist.[7] These verdicts we are in no position to review. Some fragments seem to reveal harshness and want of humour.

[1] The parasite declaims against the introduction of sun-dials, and protests that the appetite is a better time-keeper ! This serves to date the piece, as from Pliny we gather that sun-dials were introduced some ten to thirty years after Plautus's death (cf. Merry, p. 102).

[2] Literally, ' crushed the day joint by joint '. This line, together with the rest of the piece, is highly alliterative.

[3] He was brought to Rome as a prisoner of war after 200 B. C., and was subsequently granted his freedom.

[4] See p. 356.

[5] See p. 357.

[6] See p. 370.

[7] *Brutus*, 75.

The ground plan of the early theatre at Borianum Vetus

Photograph by Mr. R. Gardner

The ruins (very nearly complete) of the great theatre of Aspendus in Asia Minor

Photograph by Dr. D. G. Hogarth

There is a cynical touch in the description of the young man who wishes that his father conformed to the close-fisted type of parent, found in Comedy. 'When you are poor, in love, and have a stingy father',

YOU can filch or forge a letter, and deprive him of his dues :
You can set his nerves a-twitter by some disconcerting news.
Also, robbing from a father who is stinginess itself,
Gives you special satisfaction when you come to spend the pelf.

His own parent is too indulgent for his taste.

FOR *my* father 's open-handed and so generous and quick
That he stumps my little stratagems and trumps my every trick.[1]

A similar vein of cynicism is found in his companion's reply. He calls 'gods, citizens and young men' as though to witness a portent.

THERE 'S the gravest misdemeanour in our town, I'd have you know—
There 's a lady who *refuses* to make money of her beau !

The promised *gravitas* is not to be detected here. It is more convincingly present in such lines as

The future shade for times unborn they plant,[2]

or the sententious

Full oft lurks Wisdom 'neath a shabby coat.

Like Caecilius, PUBLIUS TERENTIUS AFER (*c.* 190–159 B. C.) was a foreigner and a slave to begin with—in this case, of African birth.[3] The fact that he and Plautus are the only Roman writers of comedy whose works survive in any completeness has too

[1] An attempt to render the play upon words—*praestringere praestigias*.
[2] A reference to the man who unselfishly plants for posterity.
[3] He enjoyed the advantage of a sound education and the *entrée* to the cultivated Scipionic circle. Contrast the early struggles of Plautus (p. 186, n. 3).

often encouraged a comparison which is hardly fair to either. There was a great difference both of environment and of purpose between the two men. Plautus wrote expressly for the stage—and the audience. His surging humour, sublimely overriding artistic considerations, is one with the answering laughter of the crowd. Terence, with powerful friends to support him, could, perhaps, afford to train his scrupulous art and fine wit on cultivated approval and the sedater demonstrations of the boxes.[1]

Take, for example, Terence's study of the Braggart Warrior and Parasite. They are much closer to reality than *Pyrgopolynices* and *Artotrogus*.[2] The Plautine hero swaggers about his feats of brawn and muscle; *Thraso* about his successful sword-thrusts of wit.[3] The part of *Gnatho* is a lightly touched-in study in irony, latent in every word he utters.[4]

THRASO (*a Captain*). GNATHO (*a Parasite*). PARMENO (*a slave*).

THR. So Thais then returns me many thanks?
GNA. Ten thousand.
THR. Say, is she delighted with it?
GNA. Not for the present's sake so much, as that
From you it was presented: But therein
She truly triumphs.

Enter PARMENO *behind.*

PAR. [*aside.*] I'm upon the watch,
To mark a proper opportunity
To bring my presents. (*turning.*) But behold the Captain! (*keeps in the background.*)

[1] Primarily. But he recognizes the value to the Drama of the support of the many. 'You (*sc.* the audience) are the means to lend the befitting grace to these entertainments. Do not allow any doing of yours to let dramatic art fall into the hands of the few, but see that your authority supports and assists mine' (*Mother-in-law*, Prol. 44–8, tr. J. Sargeaunt).

[2] See p. 194.

[3] An illuminating difference. Of course Pyrgopolynices is frankly overdrawn to make an effective stage-figure, which indeed he is.

[4] Later in the play he remarks to Thraso:

Gracious heavens!
Of what advantage is it to be wise!
I ne'er approach, but I go wiser from you.
(*Eunuchus*, 791–2, tr. Colman.)

THR. It is, indeed, something (I know not how)
Peculiar to me, do whate'er I please,
It will appear agreeable.
GNA. In truth
I always have observed it.
THR. Ev'n the King
Held himself much oblig'd, whate'er I did:
Not so to others.
GNA. Men of wit, like you,
The glory, got by others' care and toil,
Often transfer unto themselves.
THR. You've hit it.
GNA. The King then held you——
THR. Certainly.
GNA. Most dear.
THR. Most near. He trusted his whole army to me,
His counsels.—
GNA. Wonderful!
THR. And then, whene'er
Satiety of company, or hate
Of business seiz'd him—when he would repose—
As if—you understand me?
GNA. Perfectly.
When he wou'd—in a manner—clear his stomach
Of all uneasiness.
THR. The very thing.
On such occasions he chose none but me.
GNA. Ah! there 's a king indeed! a king of taste!
THR. No general man, I promise you.
GNA. Oh no!
He must have been particular indeed,
If he convers'd with you.
THR. [*not seeing Gnatho's irony*]. The courtiers all
Began to envy me, and rail'd in secret:
I car'd not: whence their spleen increased the more.

One in particular, who had the charge
Of th' elephants from India, grew at last
So very troublesome ; ' I prithee, Strato,
Are you so savage and so fierce, (said I,)
Because you're governor of the wild beasts ? '

GNA. Oh, finely said !—and shrewdly ! Excellent !
Too hard upon him !—what said he to't ?

THR. Nothing.

GNA. And how the devil should he ?

PAR. [*aside.*] Gracious heav'n !
The stupid coxcomb !—and that rascal too !

THR. Ay ! but the story of the Rhodian, Gnatho !
How smart I was upon him at a feast—
Did I ne'er tell you ?

GNA. Never : but pray do !
[*aside.*] I've heard it o'er and o'er a thousand times.

THR. We were by chance together at a feast—
This Rhodian I told you of, and I.—
I, as it happen'd, had a wench : the spark
Began to toy with her, and laugh at me.
' Why how now, Impudence ! (said I) are you
A *hare* yourself,[1] and yet would hunt for *game* ? '

GNA. Ha ! ha ! ha !

THR. What 's the matter ?

GNA. Ha ! ha ! ha !
Witty ! smart ! excellent ! incomparable !
Is it your own ? I swear I thought 'twas old.

THR. Why did you never hear it ?

GNA. Very often ;
And reckon'd admirable.

THR. 'Tis my own.

GNA. And yet 'twas pity to be so severe
On a young fellow, and a gentleman.

PAR. [*aside.*] Ah ! devil take you !

[1] *A hare yourself* : i. e. an effeminate creature like you.

GNA. What became of him ?
THR. It did for him. The company were all
Ready to die with laughing :—in a word,
They dreaded me.
GNA. No wonder.
(*Eunuchus*, Act III, Sc. 1, tr. G. Colman.)

It is hard to reproduce the strength of Terence apart from the original. The essential purity and ease of his style [1] can never be captured in the best of translation. Nor can quotation do full justice to his power of creating and handling a dramatic situation. Some characteristic passages are, subject to this caution, appended.

In the opening scene [2] of *The Girl from Andros*, *Simo* informs his freedman *Sosia* how a chance accident at the funeral of his neighbour *Chrysis* revealed his son's love affair.

SIMO (*an old gentleman*). SOSIA (*his freedman*).

SIM. You shall hear all. The corpse
Borne forth, we follow : when among the women
Attending there, I chanc'd to cast my eyes
Upon one girl, in form——
SOS. Not bad, perhaps——
SIM. And look, so modest, and so beauteous, Sosia !
That nothing cou'd exceed it. As she seem'd
To grieve beyond the rest ; and as her air
Appeared more liberal and ingenuous,
I went, and asked her women, who she was.
Sister, they said, to Chrysis : when at once
It struck my mind ; ' So ! so ! the secret 's out ;
Hence were those tears, and hence all that compassion ! '
Meanwhile the funeral proceeds : we follow ;
Come to the cemet'ry : the body 's placed

[1] In these qualities and in his restraint he is evidently much closer to his Greek originals than was Plautus or even Caecilius.

[2] The scene has dramatic value as an easy and natural means of putting the audience in possession of the facts of the play. Plautus would probably have used the clumsier ' prologue ' (cf. p. 208).

Upon the pyre, lamented : whereupon
This sister I was speaking of, all wild
Ran to the flames with peril of her life.
Then ! there ! the frighted Pamphilus betrays
His well-dissembled and long-hidden love ;
Runs up, and takes her round the waist, and cries,
' Oh my Glycerium ! what is it you do ?
Why, why endeavour to destroy yourself ? '
Then she, in such a manner, that you thence
Might easily perceive their long, long love,
Threw herself back into his arms, and wept,
Oh ! how familiarly !

(*Andria*, Act I, Sc. 1, tr. Colman.)

There is touching simplicity—of sentiment as of diction—in *Pamphilus's* declaration, later in the play, that he will be loyal to *Glycerium*.[1]

PAMPHILUS.

PAM. I should remember her ? Oh, Mysis, Mysis !
The words of Chrysis touching my Glycerium
Are written in my heart. On her death-bed
She call'd me. I approach'd her. You retir'd.
We were alone ; and Chrysis thus began :
' My Pamphilus, you see the youth and beauty
Of this unhappy maid : and well you know,
These are but feeble guardians to preserve
Her fortune or her fame. By this right hand
I do beseech you, by your better self,
By your tried faith, by her forlorn condition,
I do conjure you, put her not away,
Nor leave her to distress. If I have ever,
As my own brother, lov'd you ; or if she
Has ever held you dear 'bove all the world,
And ever shewn obedience to your will—

[1] She is expecting a child by him, which, not being born in wedlock, there was no obligation for Pamphilus to acknowledge.

I do bequeath her to you as a husband,
Friend, guardian, father: all our little wealth
To you I leave, and trust it to your care.'—
She join'd our hands, and died.—I did receive her,
And once receiv'd will keep her.

(*Andria*, Act I, Sc. 5, tr. Colman.)

In *The Mother-in-law* there is grace and noble resignation in the part of *Bacchis*, who assists *Pamphilus* (whose mistress she had been) and restores him to wife and child.

BACCHIS.

BAC. [*sol.*] That I've been
The instrument of all these joys, I'm glad,
Though others of my class would not be so;
Nor is it for our profit and advantage,
That lovers should be happy in their marriage.
But never will I, for my calling-sake,
Suffer ingratitude to taint my mind.
I found him, while occasion gave him leave,
Kind, pleasant, and good-humour'd: and this marriage
Happen'd unluckily, I must confess.
Yet I did nothing to estrange his heart;
And since I have receiv'd much kindness from him,
'Tis fit I should endure this one affliction.

(*The Mother-in-law*, Act V, Sc. 3, tr. Colman.)

There is sententious wisdom in the slave's advice to his love-distraught master.

PHAEDRIA (*a young man*). PARMENO (*his confidential slave*).

PAR. Master, the thing which hath not in itself
Or measure or advice, advice can't rule.
In love are all these ills: suspicions, quarrels,
Wrongs, reconcilements, war, and peace again:
Things thus uncertain, if by reason's rules
You'd certain make, it were as wise a task
To try with reason to run mad.

(*Eunuchus*, Act I, Sc. 1, tr. Colman.

Sententiousness is in the forefront of Terence's style. His enlivening hand bestows fresh vitality on the philosophy of saws and aphorisms.

The folly of ' wishing for the moon ',

> Nay, prithee, master, since the thing you wish
> Cannot be had, e'en wish for that which may
> (*Andria*, 305–6, tr. Colman),

the danger of candid friendship,

> Complaisance raises friends and truth breeds hate
> (*Andria*, 69, tr. Colman),

the unaccountability of men's tastes,

> But so 'tis : many men and many minds :
> Each has his fancy
> (*Phormio*, 454, tr. Colman),

—these are a few instances of many. Perhaps the most famous of them is

> I am a man and feel for all mankind,

a sentiment which gives the key to Terence. His eager interest in everyday humanity is the foundation of his comedies.[1]

Prologues in Plautus had served to give a rough outline of the play and afforded him an opportunity of good-natured banter with the audience. Terence, more artistically, leaves the play to tell its own tale and uses the prologue to indicate his sources and to defend his literary principles. In the prologue to *The Self-Tormentor*, he explains that he wishes to write a comedy of manners, not a boisterous farce :

[Ambivius Turpio, the actor-manager, *loquitur*.]

NOW follow this play with candour and allow me to represent without interruption a drama of quiet action. The footman on the run, the greybeard in a passion, the greedy sponger, the brazen adventurer, the covetous slave-dealer, are parts that I have no wish to act everlastingly at the top of my voice and with extreme exertion. For my sake bring your-

[1] Cf. Cicero, *de Republica*, IV. xi. ' Comedy is an imitation of life, a mirror of fashion, an image of truth.'

selves to see my plea as a just one that I may have some alleviation of my labours. Yes, nowadays, writers of new plays have no mercy on an old man. A fatiguing part, and it's me they run to : an easy part and another troupe gets it. In the present play you have a natural style. Try the measure of my talents in either line. Set a pattern in my case in order that the young may be more zealous to please you than to please themselves.

(*The Self-Tormentor*, Prologue, tr. J. Sargeaunt.)

Five of the six prologues contain bitter reference to one Luscius Lanuvinus,[1] a ' malevolent old poet ', who had accused the author of plagiarism, of faulty plot-construction, and of receiving help from his friends of the Scipionic circle.[2] Terence defends himself against the imputed want of originality by pleading that if he had erred it was only due to inadvertence, and that, in any case,

Nothing's said now, but has been said before.

(*Eunuchus*, Prologue 41, tr. Colman.)

As to the charge of *contaminatio* [3] of Greek plots, he points to the example of Naevius and Plautus who had standardized the practice. Of his relations with his patrons he speaks in a non-committal tone : ' it is enough for him to find favour with those who are in favour with all Rome ' (*Adelphi*, Prologue, 16–19). He neither confirms nor denies their collaboration.[4]

Terence's gifts were not such as to make him a popular poet. This he himself realized as the bitter disillusionment of the prologue to the twice-rejected *Mother-in-law* [5] shows. If Horace's picture of the Roman theatre audience may be trusted,

[1] See p. 356, where he comes last but one in Sedigitus's canon.

[2] With the suggestion that Terence was only the Shakespeare to Scipio's Bacon.

[3] The practice of combining or ' dove-tailing ' sections of two or more plots from the original Greek plays.

[4] This is a mystery which cannot be solved. The charge against Terence was often repeated. Probably his friends helped him with stray suggestions. The plays themselves reveal no signs of joint authorship (see the discussion in Norwood, *Art of Terence*, 1923, Blackwell, pp. 132 ff.).

[5] At the first performance, the audience withdrew to witness a popular tight-rope dancer. It secured a hearing at the third attempt only, thanks to the personal intercession of Turpio.

we need not wonder why Comedy, after Terence, practically ceased to flourish.

THEN too it tries an author's nerve, to find
That class in numbers strong, though weak in mind,
The brutal brainless mob, who, if a knight [1]
Disputes their judgement, bluster and show fight,
Call in the middle of a play for bears
Or boxers ;—'tis for such the rabble cares.
But e'en the knights have changed, and now they prize
Delighted ears far less than dazzled eyes.
The curtain is kept down [2] four hours or more
While horse and foot go hurrying o'er the floor, . . .
Whole fleets of ships in long procession pass,
And captive ivory follows captive brass.

A philosopher returned to earth would laugh

To see a milk-white elephant, or shape
Half pard, half camel set the crowd agape.

And the noise in the theatre !

You'd think you heard the Gargan forest roar
Or Tuscan billows break upon the shore,
So loud the tumult waxes, when they see
The show, the pomp, the foreign finery.
Soon as the actor, thus bedizened, stands
In public view, clap go ten thousand hands.
'What said he ?' Nought. 'Then what's the attraction ?'
Why,
That woollen mantle with the violet dye.

(Horace, *Ep.* ii. 1. 182–207, omitting some lines, tr. Conington.)

It is significant of the Roman public's taste—and a tribute to Terence's artistic perfection—that so few authors after him

[1] The better-educated section of the audience.
[2] With the Romans the curtain was drawn upwards, not, as with us, let fall at the end.

attempted *palliatae*. More to the popular mind was the vogue of the *togata* [1] which might be described as a popularized *palliata*. Its scene, tone, and manners were frankly Italian though its framework was still modelled on that of the Greek New Comedy. Most of its laughter was raised at the expense of the 'country-cousin', a safe draw at all times on the Roman stage.[2] Among the writers of *togatae* [3] the most popular and most productive seems to have been L. Afranius [4] (*nat. c.* 140 B. C.). His style seems to have owed something to Terence.[5] But much of his matter must have recalled Plautus in his broader moments. His pictures of the low life in Italian country-towns were often far from edifying and led to excursions across the borderland of propriety which separates comedy from farce. The result was what might have been expected. Afranius is the last of the Roman comic writers. After him the stream of comedy was rapidly merged in the current of the literary Atellane, losing itself finally in the even more licentious Mime.[6]

[1] i. e. 'Comedy in Roman dress'. Cf. p. 171, n. 2.

[2] Compare, e.g., Plautus's jests at the Praenestine habit of clipping their words (*Truculentus*, 675–91).

[3] Titinius (*c.* 190–*c.* 150 B. C.) and T. Quintius Atta (*ob.* 77 B. C.) both wrote successful *togatae*. They are praised by Varro (see p. 357) for skill in the portrayal of character. A few fragments survive (Merry, pp. 104–7 and 159–60).

[4] Cicero praises his liveliness and dramatic eloquence (*Brutus*, § 167); Horace records the popular estimation of him as the 'Roman Menander' (*Ep.* ii. 1. 57, quoted on p. 370). Quintilian speaks of his excellence in purely Roman comedy (*Inst. Or.* x. i. 100). Over forty play-titles remain. For some of the fragments see Merry, pp. 161–70.

[5] Whom he much admires. 'Terence—who shall find his like?' he asks (Merry, p. 161, frag. ii). Like Terence he borrowed freely from Menander and was not ashamed to confess the debt (ib., frag. i).

[6] See pp. 168 ff.

BUCOLIC

There are not, I believe, a greater number of any sort of verses than of those which are called Pastorals; nor a smaller than those which are truly so.—POPE, *Discourse on Pastoral.*

At the revival of learning in Italy it was soon discovered that a dialogue of imaginary swains might be composed with little difficulty: because the conversation of shepherds excludes profound or refined sentiment: and for images and descriptions, Satyrs and Fauns, and Naiads and Dryads, were always within call.—JOHNSON, *Life of Ambrose Philips.*

There are some minds which are better calculated, at least in youth, to be impressed by the inexhaustibleness of Art than by the infinity of Nature. . . . They see with the eyes of others, not with their own; but their soul nevertheless receives the vision.—J. CONINGTON, *Introd. to Virgil's Bucolics.*

Of all forms of Latin literature the Pastoral or Bucolic (or Eclogue, which meant originally a selected, and then any short, poem) depends most closely upon a Greek original. So far as we know, the inventor of this particular kind of poetry was the Alexandrian Theocritus (310–260 B.C.); and from him the Romans, who, perhaps wisely, looked to third-century Alexandria rather than to fifth-century Hellas for so many of their literary models, borrowed the Pastoral. How faithful to their original the Roman imitators were can be seen at once by any one who will trouble to compare the *Idyls* of Theocritus with the *Eclogues* of Virgil.[1]

'The history of pastoral poetry', said a great scholar, 'shows us how easily the most natural species of composition may pass into the most artificial.' Theocritus, though even he presents us with a curious mixture of the real and the ideal in country life, is on the whole true to nature; his shepherds do at least inhabit Sicily or Cos (Theocritus was born in the one island and lived for some time in the other), they are 'washed by the rivers, blest by suns of home', but Virgil's swains, and still more the Watteauesque puppets of his later imitators—Latin and other—

[1] See pp. 22 ff., 84, 112 ff., 131.

belong to no recognizable country. Tityrus of the First Eclogue is, like Virgil, a Mantuan, yet his willows are fed on by bees of Hybla (in Sicily), and these Hyblean bees are warned off the poisonous yews of Corsica.

Again, though we might expect a poet of nature to write sufficiently ' with his eye on the object ' as to describe correctly the scenery of his native country, we observe that the favourite trees of Virgil's *Eclogues* are the pine, the ilex, the chestnut, and the beech, none of which grow near Mantua, and that the goatherds pasture their goats amid beetling crags, and the shepherds shelter from the midday sun in ferny grottoes—natural features as foreign to the flat, marshy plain of Lombardy as is the sea in which those same shepherds are said to observe their reflections.[1]

Nor is this confusion confined to topography. What are we to make of the identification of the lad Daphnis whom the nymphs loved with Julius Caesar, or of Gallus, whom Virgil imitated from the dying shepherd of Theocritus, with the elegiac poet who was, at the time of Virgil's writing, serving under the future Emperor Augustus against Sextus Pompey ? That is the bad side of the picture. But it would be a mistake to be left with the impression that Virgil and the other bucolic poets of Rome were merely clumsy imitators of a species of poetry very much divorced, even in its original form, from reality. Plagiarism, we must remember, was at Rome not a literary crime but a virtue ; and inconsistencies troubled the ancients as little as the sea coast of Bohemia offended the Elizabethans. As for the idealization of nature observable in the Roman bucolic writers we can only say that they anticipated a principle laid down by Pope who remarked that poets ' must use some illusion to render a pastoral delightful ' ; by which he meant, as he indeed said, ' exposing the best side only of a shepherd's life and concealing its miseries '. Nor, it may be added, did Virgil carry this principle as far as did Pope himself ; and in the Roman writer there is still enough love of nature unadorned—though, it is true, of nature in her tamer aspect—to justify the admiration which his eclogues have always evoked.

[1] It is only fair to add that these and similar considerations have given rise to a modern theory according to which the eclogues were written at Naples, so that the scenery is Neapolitan. (See Tenney Frank's *Vergil, A Biography*.)

A love song addressed by the shepherd Corydon to Alexis.

CRUEL Alexis, carest thou no whit
For all my lays, nor pitiest at all ?
Thou'lt be my death at last ! Now kine and sheep
Seek shade and coolness, now the lizard lurks
In thorny brakes, and Thestylis compounds
For reapers weary with the scorching heat
A savoury mess of garlic and wild thyme.
But as I track thee 'neath the blazing sun—
A grating cricket-choir in every bush
Makes symphony with me. Rather would I
Bear with the sullen ire and high disdain
Of Amaryllis, rather would I choose
Menalcas, though he wears a swarthy skin.
O fair white youth, confide not overmuch
In colour. For the privet-blossoms fall,
But gathered are the dusky hyacinths.
Thou spurnest me, nor askest what I am,
How great my flocks, how deep my foaming pails,
Which neither summer's heat nor winter's frost
E'er lightened yet. A thousand lambs of mine
Roam the Sicilian[1] hills. I know the songs
Wherewith Amphion[2] called his cattle home
On Acte's Aracynthus. Nor am I
Ill-favoured, for I saw myself yestreen
In the sea's marge, when all the waves were laid
By sleeping winds. Can the glassed image lie ?
Judge thou and see if Daphnis be more fair.
O deign to haunt rough field and lowly cot
With me, to shoot the stag, and with green wand

[1] Sicilian because of the Sicilian Theocritus from whose eleventh Idy (Cyclops) this is translated.

[2] Amphion was a Boeotian hero. Aracynthus was a mountain ridge in Aetolia. It is typical of Virgil's disregard for detail that he applies to it the epithet Actean or Attic (i. e. belonging to the 'county' of Athens).

'The Sicilian Hills.' View near Girgenti in Sicily

Photograph by Mr. R. Gardner

To gather flocks of kids! Then thou and I
Will mimic Pan with woodland melodies.
Pan taught to join with wax a row of reeds,
The shepherd and the sheep are dear to Pan.
Nor, prithee, loathe to chafe thy gentle lip
Along the reeds. To understand this art
What pains Amyntas took! I have a pipe
Of seven unequal hemlock-stems compacted.
Damœtas gave it me, and dying said:
'Now serve thy second master.' Thus he said,
And fool Amyntas burned with jealousy.
Two fawns have I beside; I found them laid
Deep in a perilous glen; whose hides are flecked
E'en yet with white, and twice a day they drain
A ewe's full udder. Lo! they wait for thee.
Thestylis long has asked them for her own,
Yea, and shall take them, since thou countest cheap
My choicest gifts. Come to me, beauteous boy!
See, the Nymphs bring thee basketfuls of lilies,
See, the bright Naiad plucks wan violets
And poppy-heads, to blend with daffodil
And scented fennel-flower: then weaving in
Cassia and many a fragrant herb, she sets
Dusk hyacinths in yellow marigold.
Myself will gather quinces silvered o'er
With downy fleece, chestnuts, my Amaryll's joy,
And waxen plums: to plums be honour too;
Bays will I add, with you, ye sister myrtles:
So shall ye mingle your delicious breath.
Corydon, thou'rt a boor! Alexis cares
Nought for thy gifts, and if with gifts thou strive
Iollas would out-gift thee.[1] Out! alack!
What has my folly wrought? I have let loose
The southern gale upon my flowers, wild boars

[1] He fears the rivalry of Alexis's master, Iollas.

Into my running rills. Whom dost thou fear,
Infatuate boy? For woods have been the haunt
Of Trojan Paris and the holy gods.
Let Pallas dwell within the wallèd towns
Herself hath planted, but the woods 'fore all
Shall be my joy. The grisly lioness
Follows the wolf, the wolf in turn the goat,
The playful goat follows the lucerne-bloom,
And Corydon thee, Alexis: each is drawn
By his peculiar joy. See, now the steers
Drag home the ploughshares hanging from the yoke,
And shadows deepen with departing day.
But me Love burns: how should Love cease to burn?
Ah Corydon, Corydon, what frenzy now
Hath seized thee? To thy leaf-dark elm-tree clings
Thy half-pruned vine. Why dost not rather strive
At least to finish out some common task,
Plaiting soft rush and withy? Another love,
If this disdaineth thee, will soon be thine.

(*Ecl.* ii, tr. T. S. Royds.)

The following eclogue, generally called the Pollio because addressed to Pollio, the Consul of 40 B. C., has given rise to much controversy. It celebrates the birth of a child and the consequent advent of an age of gold. Who this child was we cannot be sure; though we may safely, despite curious and striking coincidences of the language of Virgil with that of Isaiah, dismiss the idea of Messianic prophecy. The reference is probably to the expected child of Octavian (the future Emperor Augustus) and Scribonia. When this child was born it was not a boy but a girl—the afterwards notorious Julia.

MUSES of Sicily, lift a nobler strain!
Some love not shrubs and lowly tamarisks.
If woods we sing, let woods beseem a prince.
The last age told by Cumæ's seer[1] is come,

[1] The Sibyl.

A mighty roll of generations new
Is now arising. Justice now returns
And Saturn's realm, and from high heaven descends
A worthier race of men. Only do thou
Smile, chaste Lucina[1], on the infant boy,
With whom the iron age will pass away,
The golden age in all the earth be born ;
For thine Apollo reigns. Under thy rule,
Thine, Pollio, shall this glorious era spring,
And the great progress of the months begin.
Under thy rule all footprints of our guilt
Shall perish, and the peaceful earth be freed
From everlasting fear. Thou, child, shalt know
The life of gods, and see commingled choirs
Of gods and heroes, and be seen of them,
And rule a world by righteous father tamed.
Then Earth shall haste to bring thee birthday gifts,
Uncultured Earth : the ivy's gadding curls,
Cyclamen and the water-lily twined
With laughing bear's-breech. Uncompelled thy goats
Shall bring their udders heavy-laden home,
And monstrous lions scare thy herds no more.
Thy very cot shall bloom with winsome flowers,
Serpents shall cease, the treacherous poison-plant
Shall fail, Assyrian balm shall fill the land.
But when thou'lt read the praise of famous men
And thy sire's deeds, and know true excellence,
The plain shall softly teem with yellowing corn,
And grapes shall blush upon the unkempt briar,
And honeydew shall weep from seasoned oaks.
Nathless some taint of old iniquity
Shall stay, to bid men tempt with ships the sea[2]

[1] The goddess of child-birth.
[2] The ancients always retained some vestiges of the idea that sailing the sea was a sin against nature.

And build them city-walls and furrow earth
With ploughshares. A new Tiphys[1] shall arise,
A second Argo fraught with chosen knights,
And other wars shall rage, and once again
Shall valorous Achilles fare to Troy.
And when strong time hath wrought thee to a man,
The seafarer shall roam the wave no more,
Nor ships make merchandise: for all the earth
Shall be all-fruitful. Neither shall the vine
Suffer the pruning-hook, nor fields the hoe.
And lusty husbandmen from ox's neck
Shall loose the yoke; and wool with divers hues
Need not to cheat, for lo! the living ram
Shall softly blush with purple fleece, or glow
With saffron yellow; grazing lambs shall wear
Vestments of scarlet in the bounteous meads.
'So run, fair ages,' to their spindles sang
The Fates that weave the stedfast web of God.

. . . . . .

Learn[2], babe, to laugh when mother calls thee now,
Thy mother weary with her ten long months.
Learn, baby, now: who has not known the smile
Of parents' eyes, he is not meet to share
Tables of gods or beds of goddesses.

(*Ecl.* iv, tr. T. S. Royds.)

Menalcas challenges a younger shepherd, Mopsus, to a competition in song. Mopsus sings this funeral song for Daphnis:

'THE Nymphs for Daphnis by a hard fate slain
Wept, and ye woods and rivers shared their pain.
His mother praying clasped his wretched corse
And strove to move the cold stars to remorse.

[1] Tiphys was helmsman of the Argo.

[2] A very obscure passage. The general sense is: hasten; if you delay you will forfeit the love of parents weary of waiting; and if parents do not love a child that child can never become, or enjoy the rewards of, a hero.

No neatherd, Daphnis, for that death of thine
Drove to the cooling stream his pastured kine.
No beast to taste the water-spring had heart,
And from sweet meadow-grasses stood apart.
Daphnis, I learned from woods and mountains lone
How Libyan lions for thy death made moan.
Tigers were yoked to cars at thy command,
And pageants of the Bacchic dancers planned,
And soft leaves woven round the supple wand,
The vine her tree, the grapes their vine adorn,
Herds worship bulls, and fields are crowned with corn ;
So dost thou grace all thine. Of thee bereft
By Pales[1] and by Phœbus fields were left.
In furrows where we sowed big barley-seeds
Now spring wild oats and worthless darnel-weeds.
For bright narcissus and soft violet-flowers
The thistle and the sharp Christ-thorn are ours.
Sprinkle the ground with leaves, o'ershade the rills
With trees, ye shepherds, for so Daphnis wills,
And build a tomb and carve thereon this rhyme :
" Here, famed from greenwood to the stars sublime,
Lies Daphnis, tender of a flock most fair,
Himself the shepherd e'en more debonair." '

(*Ecl.* v, 20–44, tr. T. S. Royds.)

Two lads find Silenus—half shepherd, half god—asleep in a cave. They waken him and persuade him to sing them the following song.

It is interesting to compare this eclogue with the poetry of Lucretius.[2] Virgil is here imitating the older poet.

FOR this he sang :—How, drawn from that vast void,
Gathered the germs of earth and air and sea
And liquid flame. How the Beginning sprang
Thence, and the young world waxed into a ball.
Then Earth, grown harder, walled the sea-god off

[1] A country deity.

[2] See pp. 95 ff.

In seas, and slowly took substantial form :
Till on an awed world dawned the wondrous sun,
And straight from heaven, by clouds unbroken, fell
The showers : as woods first bourgeoned, here and there
A wild beast wandering over hills unknown.
Of Pyrrha casting stones,[1] and Saturn's reign,
The stolen fire, the eagles of the rock,[2]
He sings : and then, beside what spring last seen
The sailors called for Hylas[3] till the shore
All rang with ' Hylas,' ' Hylas ' :—and consoles
(Happy if horned herds never had been born)
With some fair bullock's love Pasiphaë.[4]
Ah ! hapless maid ! What madness this of thine ?
Once a king's daughters[5] made believe to low,
And ranged the leas : but neither stooped to ask
Those base beasts' love : though each had often feared
To find the ploughman's gear about her neck,
And felt on her smooth brow for budding horns.
Ah ! hapless maid ! Thou roam'st from hill to hill :
He under some dark oak—his snowy side
Cushioned on hyacinths—chews the pale-green grass,
Or woos some favourite from the herd. ' Close,[6] Nymphs,
Dictæan Nymphs, oh close the forest-glades !
If a bull's random footprints by some chance
Should greet me ! Lured, may be, by greener grass,
Or in the herd's wake following, vagrant kine
May bring him straight into my father's fold ! '
—Then sings he of that maid[7] who paused to gaze

[1] The ancients had a Flood story like that of Genesis. Pyrrha and Deucalion, the sole survivors, threw behind them stones which became men and women, and so repeopled the earth.
[2] A reference to the theft and punishment of Prometheus.
[3] The favourite of Hercules, stolen by the water-nymphs.
[4] i. e. tells how Pasiphaë consoled herself. Pasiphaë, wife of Minos, was mother by a bull of the Minotaur.
[5] The daughters of Proetus thought themselves cows.
[6] Pasiphaë's own (imagined) words. [7] Atalanta.

At the charmed apples :—and surrounds [1] with moss,
Bitter tree-moss, the daughters of the Sun,
Till up they spring tall alders.—Then he sings
How Gallus [2], wandering to Parnassus' stream,
A sister led to the Aonian hills,
And, in a mortal's honour, straight uprose
The choir of Phœbus : How that priest of song,
The shepherd Linus,—all his hair with flowers
And bitter parsley shining,—spake to him.
'Take—lo ! the Muses give it thee—this pipe,
Once that Ascræan's old : [3] to this would he
Sing till the sturdy mountain-ash came down.
Sing thou on this, whence sprang Æolia's grove,[4]
Till in no wood Apollo glory more.'
So on and on he sang :—How Scylla [5], famed,
In story, troubled the Dulichian ships ;
And in the deep seas bid her sea-dogs rend
The trembling sailors. Tereus' tale he told,
How he was changed : what banquet Philomel [6],
What present, decked for him : and how she flew
To the far wilderness ; and flying paused—
(Poor thing)—to flutter round her ancient home.

All songs which one day Phœbus sang to charmed
Eurotas [7]—and the laurels learnt them off—

[1] i. e. tells how Phaëthon's sisters were transformed into alders.

[2] For Gallus, see introduction and notes to the last passage of Virgil's *Eclogues*. Virgil pictures one of the Muses ('a sister') leading Gallus to Mount Helicon and there endowing him with the gift of song. Note the incongruity of this in the mouth of the mythical Silenus.

[3] i. e. Hesiod's.

[4] Gallus translated the works of Euphorion of Chalcis among which was a poem telling the story of the origin of the grove of Grynium in Aetolia.

[5] I have altered Calverley's 'Nisus' to 'Scylla'. Virgil has 'Scylla daughter of Nisus'. Roman writers confuse Dulichia with Ithaca ; hence Dulichian ships are Ulysses' ships.

[6] Philomela, afterwards turned into a nightingale, served up to Tereus, afterwards turned into a hoopoe, the body of their child Itys.

[7] River of Sparta.

He sang. The thrilled vales fling them to the stars.
Till Hesper bade them house and count their flocks,
And journeyed all unwelcome up the sky.

(*Ecl.* vi, 31–86, tr. C. S. Calverley.)

An example of an amoebaean song where two shepherds contend for a prize singing alternate stanzas. The first suggests the subject, the second tries to outdo him.

CORYDON.

O DAUGHTER of Nereus,[1] than sweet thyme more sweet,
Snowy-white as the swan, as the pale ivy fair,
When thou hearest my fed cattle's home-coming feet,
O hither, if Corydon still is thy care.

THYRSIS.

Nay, call me more bitter than crowfoot, my dear,
Rough as broom, as abandoned as weed of the sea,
If without thee I count not each day a full year.
Shame, kine, that ye linger so long on the lea!

CORYDON.

O moss-pillowed fountains, grass softer than sleep,
Green arbutus netting the shimmering shade,
Lo! summer is here: bid him scorch not the sheep;
And the soft vine with burgeoning shoots is arrayed.

THYRSIS.

Here are fires never-failing and pine-faggots good,
Under soot-blackened rafters we laugh at the cold,
As high banks are laughed at by rivers in flood,
Or as one wolf despises the numberless fold.

CORYDON.

Bearded chestnuts and junipers tower to the sky,
And apples lie strewn under every tree.
All Nature is smiling; but streams will be dry
If beauteous Alexis depart from the lea.

(*Ecl.* vii, 37–56, tr. T. S. Royds.)

[1] i. e. Galatea, daughter of Nereus, a god of the sea.

Damon and Alphesiboeus sing in friendly rivalry. The song of the latter, telling of an attempt on the part of a forsaken girl to recall her lover by means of sympathetic magic, should be compared with Theocritus's Second Idyl (cf. *The Pageant of Greece*, pp. 375–80), of which it is a close imitation. For an English parallel compare Rossetti's *Sister Helen*.

'TWAS at the hour when night's cold shadow scarce
Had left the skies; when, blest by herdsmen, hangs
The dewdrop on the grass; that Damon leaned
On his smooth olive-staff, and thus began:

'Wake, morning star! Prevent warm day, and come!
While, duped and humbled, I—because I loved
Nisa with all a husband's love—complain;
And call the gods, (though naught their cognizance
Availed,) at my last hour, a dying man.
Begin, my flute, a song of Arcady.

'There forests murmur aye, and pines discourse,
And lovelorn swains; and Pan, who first reclaimed
From idleness the reed, hath audience there.
Begin, my flute, a song of Arcady.

'Nisa—is aught impossible in love?—
Is given to Mopsus. Griffins next will mate
With mares: our children see the coward deer
Come with the hound to drink. Go, shape the torch,
Mopsus! fling, bridegroom, nuts[1]! Thou lead'st a wife
Home, and o'er Œta peers the evening star
Begin, my flute, a song of Arcady.

'Oh, mated with a worthy husband! thou
Who scorn'st mankind—abhorr'st this pipe, these goats
Of mine, and shaggy brows, and hanging beard:
Nor think'st that gods can see what mortals do!
Begin, my flute, a song of Arcady.

[1] Nuts at a Roman wedding played the part of rice at an English one.

'Within[1] our orchard-walls I saw thee first,
A wee child with her mother—(I was sent
To guide you)—gathering apples wet with dew.
Ten years and one I scarce had numbered then;
Could scarce on tiptoe reach the brittle boughs.
I saw, I fell, I was myself no more.
Begin, my flute, a song of Arcady.

'Now know I what love is. On hard rocks born,
Tmaros, or Rhodope, or they who dwell
In utmost Africa do father him;
No child of mortal blood or lineage.
Begin, my flute, a song of Arcady.

'In her son's blood a mother dipped her hands
At fierce love's bidding. Hard was her heart too—
Which harder? her heart or that knavish boy's?
Begin, my flute, a song of Arcady.

'Now let the wolf first turn and fly the sheep:
Hard oaks bear golden apples: daffodils
Bloom on the alder: and from myrtle-stems
Ooze richest amber. Let owls vie with swans;
And be as Orpheus—Orpheus in the woods,
Arion with the dolphins—every swain,[2]
(Begin, my flute, a song of Arcady)

'And earth become mid-ocean. Woods, farewell!
Down from some breezy mountain height to the waves
I'll fling me. Take this last gift ere I die.
Unlearn, my flute, the songs of Arcady.'

Thus Damon. How the other made reply
Sing, sisters. Scarce may all do everything.

[1] Any one who would see Virgil bettering his original should compare this with Theocritus's Eleventh Idyl (l. 25 et sqq.).

[2] i. e. let the shepherd Tityrus be as good a musician as sylvan Orpheus or marine Arion.

ALPHESIBŒUS.

'Fetch water: wreathe yon altar with soft wool:
And burn rich vervain and brave frankincense;
That I may try my lord's clear sense to warp
With dark rites. Naught is lacking save the songs.
Bring, songs, bring Daphnis from the city home.

'Songs can bring down the very moon from heaven.
Circe with songs transformed Ulysses' crew.
Songs[1] shall in sunder burst the cold grass-snake.
Bring, songs, bring Daphnis from the city home.

'Three threads about thee, of three several hues,
I twine; and thrice—(odd numbers please the god)—
Carry thy image round the altar-stones.
Bring, songs, bring Daphnis from the city home.

'Weave, Amaryllis, in three knots three hues.
Just weave and say "I'm weaving chains of love."
Bring, songs, bring Daphnis from the city home.

'As this clay hardens, melts this wax, at one
And the same flame: so Daphnis 'neath my love.
Strew meal, and light with pitch the crackling bay.
Daphnis burns me; for Daphnis burn these bays.
Bring, songs, bring Daphnis from the city home.

'Be his such longing as the heifer feels,
When, faint with seeking her lost mate through copse
And deepest grove, beside some water-brook
In the green grass she sinks in her despair,
Nor cares to yield possession to the night.
Be his such longing: mine no wish to heal.
Bring, songs, bring Daphnis from the city home.

'Pledges of love, these clothes the traitor once
Bequeathed me. I commit them, Earth, to thee

[1] Songs: more accurately charms or incantations. This effect of charms upon snakes was believed literally.

Here at my threshold. He is bound by these.
Bring, songs, bring Daphnis from the city home.

'These deadly plants great Mœris gave to me,
In Pontus plucked: in Pontus thousands grow.
By their aid have I seen him skulk in woods
A wolf, unsepulchre the buried dead,
And charm to other fields the standing corn.
Bring, songs, bring Daphnis from the city home.

'Go, Amaryllis, ashes in thy hand:
Throw them—and look not backwards—o'er thy head
Into a running stream. These next I'll try
On Daphnis; who regards not gods nor songs.
Bring, songs, bring Daphnis from the city home.

'See! While I hesitate, a quivering flame
Hath clutched the wood, self-issuing from the ash.
May this mean good! Something—for Hylas too
Barks at the gate—it must mean. Is it true?
Or are we lovers dupes of our own dreams?
Cease, songs, cease. Daphnis comes from the city home!'
(*Ecl.* viii, 14–end, tr. C. S. Calverley.)

Mœris and Lycidas beguile the way with singing.

MŒRIS.

TIME carries all—our memories e'en—away.
Well I remember how my boyish songs
Would oft outlast the livelong summer day.
And now they're all forgot. His very voice
Hath Mœris lost: on Mœris wolves have looked.[1]
—But oft thou'lt hear them from Menalcas yet.

[1] There was an old superstition that if a wolf saw a man before the man saw it the man became dumb. Cf. W. Morris in *Life and Death of Jason*, 'sure the grey wolf hath seen Medea to-day'.

LYCIDAS.

Thy pleas but draw my passion out. And lo!
All hushed to listen is the wide sea-floor,
And laid the murmurings of the soughing winds.
And now we're half-way there. I can descry
Bianor's grave. Here, Mœris, where the swains
Are raking off the thick leaves, let us sing.
Or, if we fear lest night meanwhile bring up
The rain clouds, singing let us journey on—
(The way will seem less tedious)—journey on
Singing: and I will ease thee of thy load.

MŒRIS.

Cease, lad. We'll do what lies before us now:
Then sing our best, when comes the Master home.

(*Ecl.* ix, 51–end, tr. C. S. Calverley.)

The next is one of the most beautiful but at the same time one of the most confused of Virgil's *Eclogues*. The poet in the person of a shepherd sings of Gallus and his unrequited love. The prototype of Gallus is the dying shepherd, Daphnis, of Theocritus's First Idyl, but Gallus himself is the poet friend of Virgil, C. Cornelius Gallus (cf. p. 131). Hence he appears now as dying under a rock in Arcadia, now as serving in an Italian campaign.

It is scarcely necessary to call attention to the likeness of the opening (itself taken directly from Theocritus) to Milton's *Lycidas*.

WHERE were ye, Naiad nymphs, in grove or glen,
When Gallus died of unrequited love?
Not heights of Pindus or Parnassus, no
Aonian Aganippe[1] kept ye then.
Him e'en the laurels wept and myrtle-groves.
Stretch'd 'neath the lone cliff, piny Mænalus
And chill Lycæum's stones all wept for him.
The sheep stood round. They think not scorn of us;

[1] A spring in Boeotia.

And think not scorn, O priest of song, of them.
Sheep fair Adonis fed beside the brooks.
The shepherds came. The lazy herdsmen came.
Came, from the winter acorns dripping-wet,
Menalcas. 'Whence,' all ask, 'this love of thine?'
Apollo came: and, 'Art thou mad,' he saith,
'Gallus? Thy love, through bristling camps and snows,
Tracks now another's steps.' Silvanus came,
Crowned with his woodland glories: to and fro
Rocked the great lilies and the fennel bloom.
Pan came, Arcadia's Pan: (I have seen him, red
With elder-berries and with cinnabar:)
'Is there no end?' quoth he: 'Love heeds not this:
Tears sate not cruel Love: nor rills the leas,
Nor the bees clover, nor green boughs the goat.'
But he rejoins sad-faced: 'Yet sing this song
Upon your hills, Arcadians! none but ye
Can sing. Oh! pleasantly will rest my bones
If pipe of yours shall one day tell my loves.
Oh! had I been as you are! kept your flocks,
Or gleaned, a vintager, your mellow grapes!
A Phyllis, an Amyntas—whom you will—
Had been my passion—what if he be dark?
Violets are dark and hyacinths are dark.—
And now should we be sitting side by side,
Willows around us and a vine o'erhead,
He carolling, or plucking garlands she.'
—Here are cold springs, Lycōris[1], and soft lawns,
And woods: with thee I'd here decay and die.
Now, for grim war accoutred, all for love,
In the fray's centre I await the foe:
Thou, in a far land—out the very thought!—
Gazest (ah wilful!) upon Alpine snows
And the froz'n Rhine—without me—all alone!

[1] Gallus's lady-love.

May that frost harm not thee! that jaggèd ice
Cut ne'er thy dainty feet! I'll go, and play
My stores of music—fashioned for the lyre
Of Chalcis[1]—on the pipe of Arcady.
My choice is made. In woods, 'mid wild beasts' dens,
I'll bear my love, and carve it on the trees:
That with their growth my loves may grow and grow.
Banded with nymphs I'll roam o'er Mænalus,
Or hunt swift boars; and circle with my dogs,
Unrecking of the cold, Parthenia's glades.
Already over crag and ringing grove
I am borne in fancy: laugh as I let loose
The Cretan arrow from the Parthian bow:—

Pooh! will this heal thy madness? will that god
Learn mercy from the agonies of men?
'Tis past: again nymphs, music, fail to please.
Again I bid the very woods begone.
No deed of mine can change him: tho' I drink
Hebrus in mid December: tho' I plunge
In snows of Thrace, the dripping winter's snows:
Tho', when the parched bark dies on the tall elm,
'Neath Cancer's star I tend the Æthiop's sheep.
Love 's lord of all. Let me too yield to Love.

(*Ecl.* x, 9–69, tr. C. S. Calverley.)

CALPURNIUS, the author of seven eclogues, is a poet of whose life we know singularly little. Even the date of his birth is a mystery, and critics have placed him as early as the beginning of Nero's reign (A.D. 54) and as late as the reign of Carus (A.D. 282–3). There is no trustworthy external evidence, and all we gather from the poet himself is that he lived and wrote under a young prince recently advanced to the purple. Besides the two emperors already mentioned, Domitian (81–96) and Commodus (180–92) have been suggested as possibilities, but we may

[1] Another reference to Gallus's translation of the poems of Euphorion of Chalcis.

with considerable probability conclude that Calpurnius wrote during the early years of Nero's reign.

Calpurnius takes us one remove further from the truth, for as Virgil imitated Theocritus so did he imitate Virgil. As might be expected, therefore, his poetry is somewhat jejune though it still shows a directness and simplicity lacking in the later Latin imitations of Renaissance scholars, and still more so in the Italian, English, and French pastorals of Tasso, Pope, and André Chénier.

A song contest between Idas and Astacus with Thyrsis as judge:

IDAS, ASTACUS, THYRSIS.

MAID Crotale yet unsubdued
Young Astacus and Idas wooed;
Idas possessed a fleecy herd,
His garden Astacus preferred.
Their passion grew through many an hour,
Both graced alike with Beauty's dower,
Nor less well matched in shepherd's glees.
They, when with blighting heat the leas
Were withering, together met
By chance near one cool rivulet
And the same elms. Each youth prepares
To match his rival in soft airs,
And wagered forfeits; seven sheep
Idas, the other will not keep
His garden's harvest if he lose,
And both as arbitrator choose
Thyrsis, for 'twas a contest rare.
Of cattle every kind was there,
Wild beasts, and whatsoe'er on high
With roving pinions cleaves the sky.
There all, who sheep slow-pacing lead
Beneath the ilex green to feed,
Bear Father Faunus company;
And thither twi-horned Satyrs hie.
Nymphs of the woods and waters meet,
Dry-sandalled, or with dewy feet,

On the hills over Tivoli

Photograph by Mr. R. Gardner

And rivers, hastening from their source,
Stayed for awhile their wonted course.
The Eastern breeze, that rides at play
On quivering leaves, now dies away,
And all the vast expanse of hills
With penetrating silence fills.
All nature now to rest was laid,
And bulls were trampling o'er the glade,
Careless of pasture; e'en the bee,
That cunningest of workers, she,
While these debate their mutual powers,
Dared leave awhile her nectared flowers.
And now beneath an elm's deep shade
Thyrsis between the pair had made
His resting-place. 'Ye boys,' quoth he,
'Your stakes, while judgment lies with me,
I warn ye, will not count for much;
Nay, let your full reward be such,
That he who wins shall reap the fame,
And he who loses bear the shame.
And now, that ye the clearer may
Mark your alternate roundelay,
Each make quick motions with his hand,
And finger-signals thrice expand.'[1]
Straightway they score defeats and wins
On fingers. Idas first begins.

IDAS.

Silvanus loves me, and he feeds
His flame with gifts of well-made reeds,
Wreaths of the ever-verdant pine—
His gift—around my temples twine.
To me, ere ceased my boyhood's hour,
His voice rehearsed a song of power;

[1] The antique equivalent for tossing up to see who should begin.

'A slender pipe there grows,' quoth he,
'Already on curved reeds for thee.'

ASTACUS.

But Flora round my locks doth make
Wreaths of pale grasses for my sake,
For me, where spread the orchard's roots,
Pomona plays with dancing fruits.
'Take then,' so ran the Nymphs' decree,
'Take, Boy, this spring we tender thee,
So, where its runnels trickle by,
Thy garden's needs thou shalt supply.'

IDAS.

Oh! were it so that Crotale
Some Deity should bring to me!
His reign alone will I approve
On earth or 'mid the stars above,
And more, a copse I will decree
And say, 'God dwells beneath this tree,
Ye uninitiated, fly
This temple of the Deity.'

ASTACUS.

For Crotale I longing burn;
If any God his ear shall turn
To catch my vows, alone to Him,
Where emerald wavelets kiss the brim
Of yonder fount begemmed with spray,
And o'er the beds of lilies play
In rippling streams, will I set up
'Mid vine-clad elms a beechen cup.

IDAS.

From lowly hut and shepherd's roof
Stand not so scornfully aloof;
Idas is clownish, I confess,
But bears no taint of savageness.

Oft, where my turf-built altar steams,
A struggling he-lamb's lifeblood gleams,
And oft on Pales' festivals
A ewe-lamb in her honour falls.

ASTACUS.

We too have hesitated not
To offer from our orchard plot
Its first-fruits for the Lares' sake,
And cheese-cakes for Priapus make ;
Both dripping honeycombs we give,
And honey trickling from the hive ;
Nor will they less acceptance gain
Than if a goat the altar stain.

IDAS.

My flock—a thousand ewe-lambs bleat
Still tugging at the mother's teat ;
For me in rich Tarentum's field
As many dams their fleeces yield ;
In my unfailing press is found
A snow-white cheese the whole year round.
Come, and this produce, Crotale,
Shall wholly at your service be.

ASTACUS.

How many apples fallen thick
Beneath our tree my fingers pick
Would any count, 'twere easier feat
To count a field of straggling wheat.
Nor Winter's reign nor Summer's sway
Forbid fresh salad every day.
Come, and this garden, Crotale,
Shall wholly at your service be.

Scarce had their song's last echoes died,
When aged Thyrsis thus replied :

THYRSIS.

'Be equals, and, inspired thereby,
Together live in harmony.
For you by songs, and beauty's pride,
And love, and age, are close allied.'

(*Ecl.* i, tr. E. J. L. Scott.)

The praises of the youthful Nero are sung in amoebaean strains by Corydon and Amyntas in the presence of Meliboeus.

AMYNTAS.

MARK you, how at the very sound
Of Caesar's name the greenwood round
Grows wholly still? my thought recalls,
How when the air was thick with squalls,
Yon leafy copse stood all at rest,
And not a breeze the boughs possessed;
'A God,' I cried, ''tis sure a God,
Drave hence the east winds with his nod,'
And forthwith each Pharsalian[1] reed
Their piping notes from dumbness freed.

CORYDON.

Yon tender lambkins, do but mark,
Thrill with a sudden vigorous spark,
And see! the ewes' teats weightier show,
Flushed with the milk's o'erpouring flow,
And fuller fleeces do adorn
Those dams that were so lately shorn.
This scene (so runs my memory)
Once in this valley met my eye
Before; then spake the shepherds thus,
'Pales is come to visit us.'

[1] i. e. the pipes sound as by the inspiration of a god. Pharsalia was in Thessaly, and as Thessaly was famous for its pasture-lands 'Pharsalian' is equivalent to 'pastoral'.

AMYNTAS.

Yea, every country, every tribe,
Worship and praise to Him ascribe,
And He is by all gods beloved
To whom yon arbutes thus unmoved
Do reverence : from the sluggish Earth,
Warmed to new life, fresh flowers had birth,
When she had only heard his name ;
The forest, stirred by his acclaim,
Her boskage lavishly perfumes,
And awe-charmed trees renew their blooms.

CORYDON.

Soon as the lands began to feel
His godlike influence o'er them steal,
Furrows, which we had seen belie
Our hopes, in new fertility
Luxuriate ; beans full-podded yield
No vacuous rattling, and the field
Chokes not with darnel, weed malign,
Nor fears the oats' unfruitful shine.

AMYNTAS.

Our swains need fear no more to ply
Their spades as under penalty,
But, if Dame Fortune's gifts are kind,
May freely spend the gold they find ;
Nor need the ploughman, as of yore,
Upturning loosened clods, deplore,
Lest his share's jarring note betray
Some obstacle that blocks his way,
For openly he leans him now
More and more firmly on his plough.

CORYDON.

Through His boon Ceres can command
Her firstfruits at each tiller's hand,
And Bromius[1] quaffs from many a vine
Libations now of unbroached wine,
Through Him our bursting clusters greet
The vintagers' bare-treading feet,
Through Him the peasants shout acclaim
To the kind Master of their game,
Whene'er at crossings of the way
He celebrates high holiday.

AMYNTAS.

He on our mountains Peace bestows :
No obstacles, I trow, oppose
(To Him be thanks) our wish to beat
In triple measure with swift feet
The sluggish grass, or rouse a glee ;
To us both song and dance are free.
Nay more, my Muse unfettered graves
On yon green bark her rhythmic staves.
Nor are our reedpipes henceforth drowned
By the loud-braying trumpet's sound.

CORYDON.

Under this charm of Caesar's reign
Pan lighter-hearted doth again
Visit each cool Lycaean[2] glade,
And Faunus in the pleasant shade
Lies at his ease ; the Naiads lave
In yonder Fount's unruffled wave
Their beauties ; and, afraid no more
Of trampling in fresh human gore,
O'er hilltops the Oreads, fleet
Of limb, scour with unmoistened feet.

[1] Bromius is the god Bacchus. [2] Lycaeus was a mountain in Arcadia.

AMYNTAS.

O gods, I pray ye, this same youth
(For ye yourselves, in very sooth,
Did send Him down from Heaven to man),
After a life's far-lengthened span,
Recall to you, or else instead
Untwine for Him our mortal thread,
And grant Him a celestial skein
Of metal, that shall aye remain:
Let Him be God, yet not incline
For Heaven to change His Palatine.[1]

CORYDON.

Thou Caesar (whether thou dost dare
Jove's form commuted thus to wear,
Or some supernal power lies
Hidden in counterfeited guise
Of mortal mould, yet God), I pray
Still may'st thou o'er this orb bear sway
And these wide populaces prove
Thine empire endless: let thy love,
Great Father, slight its Heaven, nor cease
Thy new-inaugurated Peace.

(*Ecl.* iv, 97–144, tr. E. J. L. Scott.)

[1] i. e. his palace on the Palatine Hill.

the "fable" - heroic [illegible] subjects dressed in fable

[illegible] Ennius
Lucilius
Horace

Phaedrus (servus) (Iuberius = Claudius)

[illegible] Cent.

Petronius - prose trans. ? fables ? Babrius

Symmachus

century, latter

Avianus Elegiacs 42 fables
subjects from Babrius

French fable. in Latin trans. "Nivelles"

[illegible] Cent.

Prose version ? Phaedrus by "Romulus"

PART II

VERSE AND PROSE

STORY-TELLING AND THE NOVEL

Though the voice of modern schools
Has demurred,
By the dreamy Asian creed
'Tis averred
That the souls of men, released
From their bodies when deceased,
Sometimes enter in a beast—
Or a bird.

(AUSTIN DOBSON, *Avice.*)

ROMANTIC fiction, as we know it, was almost a stranger to classical Greece, and among the Romans a late arrival. For centuries story-telling of a literary kind meant the making and remaking of myths and national legends in traditional verse-forms. These stories did not condescend below the adventures of divine beings, the gods and demi-gods or 'heroes' with whom national history was linked; for they were mostly written to be sung or recited at the open-air festivals of small city-states, which demanded of poets not any extravagance of individual fancy, but an individual expression of the civic faith. Tales of fictitious adventure would have been out of place, unless (as in Comedy) they had some bearing on public affairs; and another source of modern romance—the sympathetic treatment of love—was precluded in the non-Dorian states,[1] such as Athens, by the subjection of women.

Artistic prose was not perfected till the fifth century B. C., and in Greek literature did not displace poetry in the purely imaginative field for some six hundred years: then at last was the Greek novel able to develop.[2] But only this formal convention

[1] The Dorian poet Stesichorus (*c.* 640–555 B. C.) of Himera in Sicily is known to have written tales of love in lyric form; Antimachus of Colophon in Asia Minor (*fl.* 404 B. C.) in elegiacs. A Hesiodic poem of earlier date, with the prosaic title *A List of Women*, included the story of Apollo's love for the mortal maid Coronis, which recurs in Ovid.

[2] The *Cyropaedia* (Education of Cyrus) by Xenophon (*c.* 425–350 B. C.) is a kind of historical novel; and a papyrus has been found which links it in certain ways to the later Greek romances. On the subject generally, cf. Prof. J. S. Phillimore's article 'The Greek Romances' in *English Literature and the Classics* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1912); also W. R. Hardie's 'The Vein of Romance' in *Lectures on Classical Subjects* (Macmillan, 1903), to both of which acknowledgements are due.

survived the decay of the city-state. Euripides had shown a tendency to humanize tragic drama; and in Hellenistic times the character-sketch, the Comedy of Manners (with an assertive love-interest), erotic elegy,and pastoral poems, are all clear signs of a new movement, which even permitted the intrusion of romantic psychology in Epic. It is clear, too, that by this time a reading public was well established.

Meanwhile the Alexandrian poet Callimachus (*c.* 310–235 B.C.) explored the local legends of common folk. These survived by oral tradition and in the digests of prose mythographers; and in them lay romance of another kind, dependent as a rule upon the marvellous or supernatural, but including very often a tale of love. His example was followed by Nicander of Colophon and other poets of Asia Minor, who took pleasure in describing miraculous changes of colour and shape. Little is known of their tales; but some of them must have borne a family likeness to our 'Just-so Stories', and some no doubt reflected the rude belief 'that there might be such a thing as a man's soul being loose from his body, and going out and in, like a bird out of its nest and back'.[1] Others might take us back to totemism and the days when there was no great distinction between animals and men. Before turning to Latin literature, it is worth noticing that Romance, with its mixed strains of love and the magical or bizarre, was born on those fringes of Hellenism where East meets West; and that it was not always a presentable child.

The Romans had little or no mythology of their own, for they thought of their gods, in early days, as *numina* or 'spirits', and did not credit them with human form. But from about 509 B.C. onwards these spirits were gradually identified with supposed Greek equivalents and took over their personal attributes and mythical history—a process to which all the Roman poets contributed. Before long the myths and national legends treated by the poets of classical Greece became as outworn as the creeds they had once enshrined. It was in the time of Catullus (87–*c.* 54 B.C.[2]), when Alexandrian models came into fashion, that a romancer might have had his opportunity; but the minor mythology quarried by Callimachus and his like remained the property of a literary clique, who used it more by way of illustration and allusion than as material for story-telling. Italian legends had no wider currency, except among antiquarians such

[1] George Eliot, *Silas Marner*, ch. 1.

[2] See pp. 21, 62 ff., 130 ff.

as Varro ; but some few were handled by Propertius in the last book of his Elegies, and others woven by Virgil into his *Aeneid* when the theme allowed. It was PUBLIUS OVIDIUS NASO (43 B.C.–A.D. 18[1]), the most facile and lucid of all Roman poets, who first saw the full possibilities of presenting the myths, Greek and Roman, as short stories in verse, and making them more generally accessible.

His earlier poems, in elegiacs, show a progressive taste for narrative, which culminates in what he believed to be his greatest work, the *Metamorphoses* (Changes of Shape). This is a poem of nearly 12,000 hexameter lines, arranged in fifteen books. About 250 myths are included,[2] sometimes hardly connected with a metamorphose, and for the most part with little historical connexion among themselves ; but by a series of clever though obvious devices each is made to lead into the next. In this way Ovid travels from the creation of the world out of chaos and through the legends of the Greek lands (with an excursion as far as Babylon) [3] to Imperial Rome. He ends with the transformations of his own century, which had seen the soul of Julius Caesar enskied as a star and expected a similar apotheosis of Augustus— a high epic climax that is hinted at in Book I, but not even approached till Book XIII. In the meanwhile a main theme is provided by the loves and jealousies of the Olympians, who effect changes of shape in themselves and in others from motives as various as expediency, vindictiveness, and compassion. It branches out into the history of their heroic progeny, some of whom—notably Hercules in Book IX—receive at death the full status of divinity, and so smoothe the way to heaven for the descendants of Venus in the Julian line : and help the wheels of Ovid's epic from Baghdad (as it were) to their Berlin. But there is such a number of stories within stories that the reader loses all thought of his destination ; and, once arrived, forgets it. He is content to remember the lively visions of Youth and Beauty, enjoying

' green days in forests and blue days at sea,'

that rewarded his wakeful moments on the way.

[1] See pp. 123 ff., 153 ff., 373.

[2] Ovid drew his material from the whole range of classical literature, but not as a copyist. He must have used the *Metamorphoses* of Nicander of Colophon, a hexameter poem—not apparently in continuous narrative form—which owed something both in subject-matter and style to the ' Aitia ' (Origins) of Callimachus. Often his sources are obscure.

[3] viz. in the tale of ' Pyramus and Thisbe, the Lovers of Babylon ' or ' How the Mulberry grew red '. Its origin is unknown.

The Rape of Europa

From a wall-painting at Pompeii

The story of Actaeon is in many ways typical. As usual, there is a certain charm in the natural setting, which is drawn with a few broad but careful strokes. Diana's nymphs, and later Actaeon's hounds, are named with short descriptive touches in the manner of an Epic catalogue, partly for the sound-effect of the Greek names,[1] and partly to give an Epic air. But the device also serves to heighten the illusion of reality; and remains a favourite with the earlier romancers of modern times:

A HOLY vale there was, Gargaphië,
Where roved Diana in her kirtle trim.
Dark pitch-pines there and spires of cypress grow,
And far withdrawn the thicket holds a cave,
Unshaped by man: yet Nature, playing Art,
The living pumice and light tufa drew
To a wild archway. On the right within
Murmurs a grass-lipped pool, shallow and clear;
Often the Forest Queen,[2] with hunting spent,
Would bathe her maiden limbs in that sweet dew.
Now is she hither come, and hands her squire
Javelin and quiver and a slackened bow;
A second nymph her kirtle takes, and two
Her buskin-latchets loose; than whom more skilled
Neat *Shingle-sprite*, from Theban river sprung,
Knots up the wantoning hair: her own unbound.
With *Cloud-cap* other four to dip the jars
Crystal and *Show'r-sweet*, *Rain-drop*, *Urna*, join,
And pour a deep draft from the tilted brim.

(iii. 155–72.)

[1] These names, denoting some function or characteristic, are all latinized and would be readily understood by an educated Roman. To an English reader they would mean little, and the accentual scansion of English verse would obscure their sound-effect. It has therefore seemed better to give rough English equivalents. Some of the names of Actaeon's hounds are taken from the versions of Golding (1567) and Sandys (1632).

[2] The Forest Queen is Diana. Soon afterwards Ovid refers to her as Titania, i. e. a descendant of Titan, the father of Hyperion and grandfather of Sol. It was from the Metamorphoses that Shakespeare borrowed the name for his Fairy Queen. His Peaseblossom and other sprites have some literary kinship with Diana's nymphs; but the English rendering of the Greek names must not be allowed to over-emphasize the connexion.

The next scene, where Actaeon (in all innocence) enters the cave, reveals something of that delight in colour so noticeable in Ovid [1] and so rare in other classical writers. Pose as well as colour may often have been suggested by famous paintings of antiquity: and through Ovid some reflection of these lost works may be seen in most of the picture-galleries of Europe:

> At sight of man
> They smite upon their breasts: the whole wood rings
> With sharp dismay: and all, with mind to shield
> Diana, closely cling. But towering high
> The goddess overpeers them, head and neck.
> Espied, she takes such colour in her cheek
> As sunbeams paint upon the fronting clouds,
> Or in the mantling morn Aurora wears.
>
> (iii. 178–85.)

At loss for bow and arrow, Diana throws water in Actaeon's face, with the taunt that now he may boast, if he can, of what he has seen. Then follow his metamorphose and punishment:

> So she: and on his wet brow makes to spring
> An old hart's horns: adds inches to his neck:
> Sharpens the ear-tips: fingers turns to feet,
> Arms into shanks, white skin to dappled hide:
> And in his heart plants Fear. Away he flies
> That was Autonoë's son, and in his flight
> Marvels at his own swiftness. Ah, what grief
> He would have spoken when the clear stream showed
> His horns; but voice was wanting, save a sigh;
> And strange the cheeks he waters—human mind
> Alone remains of all that once was man.
> Now where to fly? Back to his royal home?
> Or lurk in covert? Shame the one forbids,

[1] Elsewhere Ovid compares a blush (with more originality) to 'the red-under-white of the moon in part eclipse'—a colour visible only through glasses in this country; and Atalanta in the race has 'the glow of sunshine that floats on a marble floor beneath purple awning'.

The other, fear ; and while he weighs his doubts,
The kennel views him. *Blackfoot* opens first,
Of Spartan kind ; and *Tracer*, a good nose
From Cretan Cnossos. Wind-swift on the trail
Come *Ravener*, *Gazelle*, and *Mountaineer*,
Arcadians all ; great *Fawn-bane*, snarling *Sleuth*,
Tornado, *Bird-wing* fleet, keen-scented *Chase* ;
Ranger, but lately gashed by a wild boar ;
Gully, the bitch that had a wolf to sire ;
Shepherdess ; *Pounce*—two cubs beside her ran ;
Gaunt *Catch*, from Sicyon ; *Courier*, *Gnash*, and *Spot* ;
Tigress and *Puissance* ; *Blanche*, snow-white ; and *Soot* ;
Spartan, strong-limbed, with tireless *Hurricane* ;
And *Swift*, and racing *She-wolf*—at her side
Cypriot, her brother ; *Snatch*, a sable mask
Cut with a gleam of white ; *Cole* ; shag-haired *Rugg* ;
Fury and *White-tooth*, bred of Spartan dam,
Their sire a Cretan ; *Blab*, of the ringing note ;
—Others to name were long. By crag, by cliff,
By desperate rocks, rough ways and ways denied,
Hotly they fling. He, in familiar fields
Where once he wont to follow, flies his hounds,
And flying, ' Know Actaeon,' would exclaim,
' Know me, your master ! ' Dumb was his desire.
Full cry ! The echoes waken ! *Collier* first
Haunch-holds him ; *Kill-buck* next, with *Mountain-lad*
Fast in a shoulder. Over a scarp all three
Had cut, and crossed him—laggards at the start.
Quick to the kill come all, their master held,
And lock their fangs in flesh. Now room is none
For mouths to wound him, and aloud he moans,
—No human sound, yet never hart moaned so !
Hills, known of old, echo his cry. He falls
Suppliant on his knees, and, wanting hands
To beg their mercy, dumbly turns his head.

But now his fellow huntsmen, unawares,
Tarre on the tearing pack with usual cheer,
And all eyes seek Actaeon : every tongue,
As though to one afar, ' Actaeon ! ' calls.
He lifts his head for answer, blamed of all
As absent, slow to view that lucky find !
Oh, to be absent ! He was all too near !
And oh, to see, not feel, the bloody work
His own pack makes ! They throng, their muzzles dip,
Rending him piecemeal in that cozening shape,
The hart, their master. Not till life was out,
And wounds a thousand, was the wrath appeased
Of that stern goddess who the quiver wears.

(iii. 193–252.)

Ovid's hexameter was built for speed ; and he seems to have coined over 200 words, especially compounds, to help it along. It also lends itself to many clever effects in matching sound and sense. These cannot well be reproduced ; but perhaps something of his movement and alliteration is suggested in ll. 32–5, 42–3. We may also notice in this passage two of Ovid's most common faults. There is no better proof of imaginative power than the variety he shows in describing scenes and transformations that are like in kind, and in his methods of passing from one tale to the next. But often he indulges this resourcefulness for its own sake by expressing the same or a similar thought in different ways (cf. 51–9). The other fault is an unseasonable use of antithesis (cf. 55–6), epigram, or conceits (cf. 46–8). Both were encouraged by the fashions of Rhetoric, now steadily encroaching on the domain of poetry, and by the allied practice of reciting poetry in public. Truth of sentiment was less regarded by a smart audience than versatility and wit.

In the story of Echo and Narcissus these latter qualities are fully displayed. Echo was once like any other nymph. But she used to hold Juno in talk while Jupiter dallied with her fellow sprites of the mountain-side ; and when Juno discovered the trick she docked her powers of speech. It was after this that she fell in love with young Narcissus, who knew no love. At the last she is disembodied, and becomes what she remains to-day :

DESPISED, the wood her sad retreat receives :
Who covers her ashaméd face with leaves ;
And skulks in desert caves. Love still possessed
Her soul ; through grief of her repulse, increased.
Her wretched body pines with sleepless care :
Her skin contracts : her blood converts to air.
Nothing was left her now but voice and bones :
The voice remains ; the other turn to stones.
Concealed in Woods, in Mountains never found,
Yet heard in all : and all is but a Sound.

(iii. 393-401, tr. Sandys.[1])

Narcissus, as is well known, was punished by a hopeless passion for his own image, seen in water. As he pines away his epigrams flow as freely as his tears :

'AH wretched me ! I now begin too late
To find out all the long-perplex'd Deceit ;
It is my self I love, my self I see ;
The gay Delusion is a Part of me.
I kindle up the Fires by which I burn,
And my own Beauties from the Well return.
Whom should I court ? how utter my Complaint ?
Enjoyment but produces my Restraint,
And too much Plenty makes me die for Want.
How gladly would I from my self remove
And at a distance set the Thing I love !
My Breast is warm'd with such unusual Fire,
I wish him absent whom I most desire.
And now I faint with Grief ; my Fate draws nigh ;
In all the Pride of blooming Youth I die.
Death will the Sorrows of my Heart relieve.
Oh might the Visionary Youth survive,
I should with Joy my latest Breath resign !
But oh ! I see his Fate involv'd in mine.'

[1] Sandys's spelling has been modernized throughout.

This said, the weeping Youth again return'd
To the clear Fountain, where again he burn'd;
His Tears defac'd the Surface of the Well,
With Circle after Circle, as they fell:
And now the lovely Face but half appears,
O'er-run with Wrinkles, and deform'd with Tears.
(iii. 463–76, tr. Addison.)

At death he too suffers metamorphosis:

HIS last words were, still hanging o'er his shade:
'Ah, Boy, belov'd in vain!' So *Echo* said:
'Farewell.' 'Farewell,' sigh'd she. Then down he lies:
Death's cold hand shuts his self-admiring eyes:
Which now eternally their gazes fix
Upon the waters of infernal *Styx*.
The woeful *Naiades* lament the dead
And their clipped hair upon their brother spread.
The woeful *Dryades* partake their woes:
With both sad *Echo* joins at every close.
The funeral pile prepar'd, a hearse they brought
To fetch his body, which they vainly sought.
In stead whereof a yellow flower was found,
With tufts of white about the button crown'd.
(iii. 499–510, tr. Sandys.)

Among the peasants of his native place, Sulmona, Ovid still passes for a magician:[1] an error which may be partly due to his intimate stories of the Crimean sorceress Medea. He has told us how Aeson, her husband's father, was about to die, and how she agreed to rejuvenate him. We will follow her out into the night:

THREE nights yet wanted, ere the Moon could join
Her growing horns. When with replenished shine
She viewed the earth, the Court she leaves; her hair
Untressed, her garments loose, her ankles bare:

[1] Cf. Prof. D. A. Slater, *Ovid in the Metamorphoses* (Cambridge, University Press, n.d.), p. 2—a most suggestive sketch.

And wanders through the dead of drowsy Night
With unseen steps. Men, beasts, and birds of flight,
Deep Rest had bound in humid gyves; she crept
So silently, as if herself had slept.
No Aspen wags, moist air no sound receives:
Stars only twinkle . . .

(vii. 179–88, tr. Sandys.)

After prayer to powers infernal and supernal, to Earth who bears her simples, and to 'elves of hills, brooks, standing lakes and groves',[1] she mounts her dragon-borne chariot, and for nine days, nine nights, goes herb-gathering with a sickle of bronze. (Ovid, Alexandrian-wise, gives the geography of her quest.) On her return she preserves a ceremonial purity; and, after a sacrifice of appeasement, proceeds with her magic arts:

FURIOUS *Medea*, with her hair unbound,
About the fragrant Altar trots a Round.
The brands dips in the ditches, black with blood;
And on the Altars fires th' infected wood.
Thrice purges him with waters, thrice with flames,
And thrice with sulphur; muttering horrid names.
Meanwhile, in hollow brass the med'cine boils:
And, swelling high, in foamy bubbles toils.
There seethes she what th' *Aemonian* vales produce:
Roots, juices, flowers, and seeds of sovereign use.
Adds stones, from Oriental rocks bereft:
And others by the ebbing Ocean left.
The dew collected ere the Dawning springs:
A Screech-owl's flesh, with her ill-boding wings.
The entrails of ambiguous Wolves; that can
Take, and forsake, the figure of a man.[2]
The liver of a long-liv'd Hart: then takes

[1] Shakespeare borrowed part of this line (*Tempest*, v. i. 33) from Golding's version of Ovid (1567) which he used more often than the original. Golding writes 'Ye Ayres and windes: ye Elves of Hilles, of Brookes, of Woods alone, of standing Lakes.'

[2] Cf. the story quoted from Petronius on p. 261 f.

The scaly skins of small *Cinyphean* snakes.
A Crow's old head, and pointed beak, was cast
Among the rest ; which had nine ages passed.[1]
These, and a thousand more, without a name,
Were thus prepared by the barbarous Dame
For human benefit. Th' ingredients now
She mingles with a withered Olive bough.
Lo ! from the cauldron the dry stick receives
First verdure ; and a little after, leaves ;
Forthwith, with over-burd'ning Olives decked,
The skipping froth which under flames eject,
Upon the ground descended in a dew ;
Whence vernal flowres and springing pasture grew.
This seen, she cuts the old man's throat ; out-scrus'd
His scarce-warm blood, and her receipt (infus'd)
His mouth or wound sucked in. His beard and head
Black hair forthwith adorns, the hoary shed.

(vii. 257–289, tr. Sandys.)

It may well be asked how stories such as we have read can form part of an epic. One answer is that philosophy made all things possible—but that must wait. Meanwhile we may turn back to the First Book, where myths of Apollo, the chosen god of Augustus, receive a place of honour. In one of these we are told how Cupid, to avenge a slight, inspired Apollo with fruitless love for the nymph Daphne, who was changed to a laurel to escape his pursuit. The scene of flying nymph and 'demon lover' is common in the 'Metamorphoses' ; but here Ovid is able to add an unusual epilogue. Daphne has been praying to her father, the river-god Peneus, for deliverance :

SCARCE had she finished, when her feet she found
Benumbed with cold, and fastened to the ground :
A filmy rind about her body grows :
Her hair to leaves, her arms extend to boughs :
Her feet, so swift to fly, are stayed in roots :

[1] i. e. the head of a crow which had outlived nine human generations.

Where was her face, there spring the highest shoots :
The nymph is all into a Laurel gone :
The smoothness of her skin remains alone.[1]
Yet Phoebus loves her still, and, casting round
Her bole his arms, some little warmth he found.
The tree still panted in the unfinished part :
Not wholly vegetive, and heaved her heart.
He fixed his lips upon the trembling rind ;
It swerved aside, and his embrace declined.
To whom the god, ' Because thou canst not be
My mistress, I espouse thee for my tree.
Thou shalt be mine, a crown to wear for ever,
About my brows entwined, my harp, my quiver ;
Captains of Rome shall bind with thee their heads
When up the steep a pomp triumphant spreads ;
Guarding Augustus' gate shalt thou be seen,
This side and that ; the civic oak between.' [2]

(i. 548–63.)[3]

Such myths cannot easily be made to foreshadow imperial destinies. But in Book IX he has better material. It is largely devoted to legends of the man-god Hercules, with whom Augustus, as a ' Saviour and Benefactor of mankind ', was sometimes compared ; and in fact the subject peoples of Rome made an easy transition from old hero-cults to the deification of their rulers. Notice how Ovid describes the transfiguration :

WHATEVER flame might raze, the Fire-god's might
Burned clean away. No human semblance now
Of Hercules remains, no mortal frame
Built in his mother's likeness ; all is gone
Save the pure lineaments of his father Jove.
And as some serpent, when his agéd slough

[1] See note on p. 280.

[2] Two bay-trees were planted in front of the gate-posts of the imperia palace on the Palatine. The oak chaplet, given to those who had saved the lives of citizens in battle, signified that the emperor was the ' Saviour (in the Hellenistic title) of his subjects.

[3] Tr. ll. 1–4, 7–16, by Dryden.

Is cast, in richness of his springtime moves,
Flashing his scales renewed; so Tiryns' lord [1]
Knows a new vigour in his *Better Part*,
Its mortal mould laid by. In stature risen
August he grows, clothed on with massive might,
A god tremendous; whom, through bellying clouds
Upborne by horses four, the Almighty Sire
Lifts heavenward, there to shine among the stars.

(ix. 262–73.)

And then a characteristic conceit—'Atlas perceived the load!'

Shortly afterwards comes the story of Dryope. She was bringing garlands to the nymphs of a sacred pool, when to please her child she plucked some gay lotus berries from the bank. The bough dropped blood and the whole tree shuddered: for it embodied the nymph Lotis—a second Daphne. Dryope became rooted to the spot, and took the same form as the injured nymph. There is a simplicity about her last words that Golding's version [2] does not belie. Her sister Iole tells the tale:

'MY sister now could show
No part which was not wood except her face. A dew of tears
Did stand upon the wretched leaves late formèd of her hairs;
And while she might, and while her mouth did give her way to speak,
With such complaint as this her mind she last of all did break—
" If credit may be given to such as are in wretchedness,
I swear by God I never yet deservèd this distress.
I suffer pain without desert. My life hath guiltless been.
And if I lie, I would these boughs of mine which now are green
Might wither'd be, and I hewn down and burnèd in the fire.
This infant from his mother's breasts remove you, I desire:
And put him forth to nurse, and cause him underneath my tree

[1] Hercules was the son of Alcmena, a princess of Tiryns, and Jove.
[2] See p. 249, note 1. The spelling has here been modernized.

Oft-times to suck, and oftentimes to play. And when that he
Is able for to speak, I pray you let him greet me here,
And sadly say ' In this same trunk is hid my mother dear.'
But learn him for to shun all ponds and pulling flow'rs from trees,
And let him in his heart believe that all the shrubs he sees
Are bodies of the Goddesses. Adieu, dear husband, now,
Adieu, dear father : and adieu, dear sister. And in you
If any love of me remain, defend my boughs, I pray,
From wound of cutting hook and axe, and bite of beast for aye.
And for I cannot stoop to you, raise you yourselves to me,
And come and kiss me while I may yet touch'd and kisséd be.
And lift me up my little boy. I can no longer talk,
For now about my lily neck as if it were a stalk
The tender rind begins to creep, and overgrows my top.
Remove your fingers from my face—the spreading bark doth stop
My dying eyes without your help. . . .'' '

(ix. 367–91.)

The touch of pantheism, half-ironic, should not be missed. It is not unrelated to the fashionable philosophy of the time, by which the change of a soul to a star was made plausible. ' Ether,' the burning and luminous fluid which fills the celestial spaces, was regarded as the single essence of all things—of reason, god, and nature ; and the sphere of the fixed stars as the seat of the directing reason of the world. The soul of man was but a parcel of this ether : so that the great and good, once freed from earthly dross, might rise up and shine among the blessed.[1]

Ovid reflects these doctrines in his account of creation in Book I ; but combines them with others derived from the later followers of the ancient sage Pythagoras, who formed a kind of religious order and were able to interpret the myths of all countries in a manner convenient to their system. When we have passed by way of the legends of the Trojan war (Books XII–XIII), a *résumé* of the *Aeneid* (XIII–XIV), and the apotheoses of Aeneas and Romulus—those earlier Men of Destiny—to the

[1] Cf. Cumont, *After-life in Roman Paganism* (Yale University Press, 1922), pp. 24–30.

myths of Roman kings, we are introduced to Pythagoras himself. In some four hundred lines (XV. 75–478) he exhorts King Numa to vegetarianism, and explains the cycle of generation on which that practice depends. Mind circulates eternally through the matter it animates, passing quickly at ' death ' (so-called) from man to beast, beast to man :[1]

ALL alter : nothing finally decays.
Hither and thither still the spirit strays,
Guest to all bodies. Out of beasts it flies
To men, from men to beasts, and never dies.
As pliant wax each new impression takes,
Fix'd to no form, but still the old forsakes,
Yet is the same : so souls the same abide,
Though various figures their reception hide . . .
There's nothing permanent, all ebb and flow :
Each image form'd to wander to and fro.
Ev'n Time, with restless motion, slides away
Like living streams ; nor can swift rivers stay,
Nor light-heel'd hours. As billow billow drives,[2]
Driv'n by the following ; as the next arrives
To chase the former—times so fly ; pursue
At once each other, and are ever new.
What was before, is not : what was not, is.
All in a moment change from that to this.
(xv. 165–72, 178–85, tr. Sandys.)

In this way Ovid does his best to equate, for example, the change of Galanthis to a weasel with that of a Caesar to a star. ' We are led to feel that under a mask of gaiety he is half in earnest throughout : that as the various metamorphoses certify his belief in the kinship of all living creatures on earth, so apotheosis

[1] In moralized versions of the theory nobler souls were permitted to break the cycle of destiny and escape incarnation in bestial forms. Transformation into trees &c. was allowed by some thinkers as a logical conclusion from Stoic pantheism. This idea finds humorous expression in Seneca's *Pumpkinification* of the emperor Claudius, see p. 299. Here it would certainly embarrass vegetarianism.

[2] Cf. Shakespeare, Sonnet 60.

is a declaration of faith in man's immortality and kinship with the deity.'[1] But we must not expect too much of him. His bent was psychological and dramatic, not critical; and one may add that as a courtier he was more than maladroit.

In its whole conception the poem is more Hellenistic than Roman. But the prayer at the end, that the day of Augustus's removal may be long deferred, is addressed to those peculiarly Roman gods whose worship had been made the focus of imperial loyalties. Then follows the envoi:

> AND now the work is ended which Jove's rage,
> Nor fire, nor sword shall raze, nor eating Age.
> Come when it will my death's uncertain hour,
> Which only of this body hath a power—
> Yet shall my *Better Part* transcend the sky,
> And my immortal name shall never die.
> For, wheresoe'er the Roman eagles spread
> Their conquering wings, I shall of all be read;
> And, if we poets true presages give,
> I in my fame eternally shall live.
>
> (xv. 871–9, tr. Sandys.)

Ovid claims two distinct kinds of immortality; but there is reason to believe that he felt more pride and confidence in the second—the after-life of poetic fame. This was denied to mere emperors.

His banishment (A. D. 8) prevented a final shaping and polish of the poem; and before leaving Rome he made a fine Virgilian gesture and threw his manuscript to the fire; preferring to forget, as the flames went up, that copies were in the hands of friends. These copies and their successors have more than justified his 'presages'. From the fourteenth century onwards the 'Metamorphoses' was known as 'The Bible of Poets'—a title earned by something better than mere utility; and well into the eighteenth century, with a brief reaction in Puritan times, it remained a favourite, quickening the imaginations of poets and artists from their school-days upwards. Since then it has suffered eclipse. Depth is preferred to brilliance; and it is not enough to be romantic in everything except the spirit. Later

[1] Prof. D. A. Slater, op. cit., pp. 20, 21.

generations, too, are less tolerant of its failings in composition and style, and misdoubt the irreverence of Ovid's wit—all with some justice.

The conventions of form and fashion which Ovid obeyed in presenting his short stories as elegies or epic were inherited from Alexandria, and help to explain, as we have seen, the non-appearance of the novel in Hellenistic Greek at a time when all the constituents of romance were present. Yet novelettes must have lived and multiplied in the back-streets of literature, at any rate in the second century B. C., after Aristides of Miletus, in Asia Minor, had produced six books or more of *Milesian Tales*.[1] At Rome these found a translator in the historian Lucius Cornelius Sisenna (119–67 B. C.). They were tales of love and adventure, often diverting, but disreputable enough to provoke the scorn of the Parthian vizier who found a copy in the kit of a Roman officer on the fatal field of Carrhae (53 B. C.).

Meanwhile the romantic imagination found a more dignified but profitless outlet in the Declaimed Essay of the rhetoricians. It has been truly said that 'more and more of the components of literature were being brought into the net of the Professors of Style; they taught the art of story-telling and the art of analysing and displaying motives of character'—on the principle that 'applied psychology is the essence of good oratory'.[2] To illustrate this point, let us anticipate our subject with a quotation from the first Roman novel. A candid critic is here addressing a Professor from the local college of Rhetoric:

> 'Surely our rhetoricians are tormented by some new type of Fury when they exclaim "These wounds I received in the fight for popular rights; you, Sirs, cost me this eye; is there no one will lead me to my children? My thews are cut, my strength is taken from under me!"[3] Even these speeches could be endured if they paved the way for aspirants to oratory. As it is, this inflated matter and empty rattle of choice phrases has

[1] These are the forerunners of such works as the medieval *Gesta Romanorum*, the *Facetiae* of Poggio, Boccaccio's *Decameron*, the *Heptameron* of Margaret of Navarre, the *Ragionamenti* of Aretino, the *Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles*, and the *Contes drôlatiques* of Balzac. (Cp. S. G. Owen, *P. Ovidi Nasonis Tristium Lib. II* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1924), p. 227.

[2] Prof. J. S. Phillimore, op. cit., p. 96.

[3] The maimed soldier returning from the wars to a faithless wife, whom he orders a son to execute, was a favourite subject for declamation. Here the cadences employed ('táken fróm/únder mé') are also favourites.

but one result—no sooner do pupils find themselves in a court of law than they think they have been carried into another world. In my opinion college makes perfect fools of our young men, because they neither hear nor see anything of real life there: nothing but pirates standing in fetters on the beach, tyrants writing orders for sons to behead their fathers, oracles prescribing the sacrifice of virgins, three or more, to avert a plague—honeyed rounds of verbiage, every word and act sprinkled, as it were, with poppy-seed and sesame! Students nurtured in this atmosphere can no more be sensible than kitchen-folk can smell sweet.' (Petronius, § 1.)

We have parted company with Ovid, but it is worth noticing that as a student he showed great skill in declamations that gave scope for emotional treatment, and is said to have made of them something very like *vers libre*.[1] Had he not been a born versifier, and bound by the traditions of literary form, he might well have written a prose romance, developing the highly coloured and fictitious rhetorical themes. As it happened, it was reserved for another Roman, GAIUS[2] PETRONIUS (*ob.* A.D. 66),[3] to discover the new genre; and he approached it (as our first quotation suggests) from a very different angle.

His *Satyricon* was a long work in some twenty books, of which there remain only selections from Books XV and XVI. In form it is a descendant of Menippean satire—i. e. a mixture of prose and verse—and it is not dissimilar in subject-matter and style. But themes or episodes that Varro might have treated separately[4] are presented as chapters or some lesser unit in a picaresque[5] novel, which follows the adventures of Encolpius, the narrator, his slave-boy and favourite Giton, and friend Ascyltus, a Roman knight. The style bears a marked resemblance to that of Seneca's *Apocolocyntosis*[6]—perhaps owing to a Menippean tradition. But here it is given ampler room for display, ranging with ease from the coarsest sea-port idiom,

[1] There were two kinds of declamations—*controversiae* (debates) which dealt with points of law and required the knowledge and careful reasoning necessary in preparing a case; and *suasoriae* or exercises in imaginary advice, given, often, to mythical or historical characters, e. g. Helen or Hannibal, at some crisis of their lives. The former kind were not to Ovid's taste, unless they were capable of psychological treatment.

[2] His first name is conjectural.

[3] See pp. 377 ff.

[4] See p. 285 and cf. Prof. W. C. Summers, *The Silver Age of Latin Literature* (London, Methuen, 1920), p. 235.

[5] From Spanish *pícaro*, a rogue.

[6] See p. 299.

through the polite colloquialism of the time, and up along the edges of parody to some very graceful verse. Apart from traces of a central *motif*[1] there is nothing which can be called a plot; and the inclusion of at least three Milesian tales is some index of the general tone. But much is redeemed by the satiric power of Petronius and his artistic conscience. There is every reason to identify the author with the pro-consul of Bithynia and consul-elect, who, by Tacitus' account, gave many proofs of administrative capacity, but preferred to 'idle into fame' as 'Master of Ceremonies' or 'Critic of Taste' in the court of Nero. There he 'lapsed into the habit or assumed the mask of vice', and finally took his own life (in the best manner) by Imperial command.

Persius,[2] writing at about this time, had turned to satire in disgust at poetry and declamation that were bankrupt alike of moral and literary value. Petronius, with aesthetic rather than moral sensibilities, obeys the same instinct, but has every advantage not only in knowledge of the world, but in method. Satire ties his romance to earth: and romance imposes the true satiric detachment. This is best shown in the episode of Trimalchio's dinner-party, which forms almost a third part of the extant work. Not even Horace can expose folly and bad taste with so impersonal an air; and in power of characterization he is not superior. Trimalchio is a rich freedman of Asiatic origin, resident at Cumae—a country cousin of those who were to raise the spleen of Juvenal. Encolpius describes the beginning of the feast:

THESE delicacies were engaging our attention, when Trimalchio rode in to the accompaniment of music, reclining on a lot of tiny cushions. We stifled our laughter, for we were taken by surprise. He was dressed in a scarlet cloak, and his bald head just popped over it; round his neck, which was wrapped in heavy scarves, he had a napkin with a broad purple stripe and fringes all round it. On the little finger of his left hand he had a huge gilt ring and on the top joint of his next finger a smaller one which seemed real gold, but closer inspection proved it to be set round with metal foil cut into stars. Not content with this ostentation, he had a bright gold bracelet

[1] There is possibly a burlesque of the plot of the Odyssey, in which a god's wrath pursues the hero over land and sea. [2] See p. 301.

on his bare arm and an ivory bangle with a metal clasp. Picking his teeth with a silver quill, he remarked, 'I didn't like to keep you hanging about any longer without me, gentlemen, and, though I didn't fancy coming to dinner yet, I have sacrificed my own amusement. Pardon me if I finish my game.' There was a valet following him with a backgammon board of terebinth and crystal pieces; and—such a pretty idea—for black and white counters he had gold and silver coins. So he played away, practising his vocabulary to himself; we were still occupied with the *hors-d'œuvre*, when a basket was brought in on a tray with a wooden hen in it, spreading her wings as they do when they are sitting. Loud music! Two servants came up and began scratching about in the straw. Then they pulled out peahen's eggs and passed them round to the guests. Trimalchio deigned a glance for this turn, and observed, 'My idea, gentlemen, to have peahen's eggs hatched by a barndoor fowl. Damme, I'm afraid they're addled; let's see if we can still suck them.' We took our spoons (weighing at least half a pound) and thumped the eggs (which were lumps of rich meal); I was just going to throw mine away, fearing it had got a chicken in it already. But I heard a guest, an old hand, observe, 'There's some treat here, I know!' So I pushed through the shell with my finger, and found a fat fig-pecker rolled up in spiced yolk of egg. Trimalchio now broke off his game, and asked for all the same dishes, shouting out that we were all free to take another glass of punch if we liked. (§§ 32–4, tr. H. L. Rogers and T. R. Harley.)

During the temporary absence of Trimalchio, the diners exchange some local gossip, rich in characterization. Here Ganymedes, a freedman, interrupts some rather maudlin reminiscences:

'YOU go talking about things which are neither in heaven nor earth, and none of you care all the time how the price of food pinches. I swear I cannot get hold of a mouthful of bread to-day. And how the drought goes on! There has been a famine for a whole year now. Damn the magistrates, who play "Scratch my back, and I'll scratch yours", in league

with the bakers. So the little people come off badly; for the jaws of the upper classes are always keeping carnival. I do wish we had the bucks I found here when I first came out of Asia. That was life. If the flour was any but the finest, they beat those vampires into a jelly, until they put the fear of God into them. I remember Safinius: he used to live then by the old arch when I was a boy. He was more of a mustard-pot than a man: used to scorch the ground wherever he trod. Still he was straight; you could trust him, a true friend: you would not be afraid to play at morra [1] with him in the dark. How he used to dress them down in the senate-house, every one of them, never using roundabout phrases, making a straightforward attack! And when he was pleading in the courts his voice used to swell like a trumpet. Never any sweating or spitting: I imagine he had a touch of the Asiatic style.[2] And how kindly he returned one's greeting, calling every one by name quite like one of ourselves! So at that time food was dirt-cheap. You could buy a larger loaf for twopence than you and your better half together could get through. One sees a bun bigger now. Lord, things are worse every day. This town goes downhill like the calf's tail. But why do we put up with a magistrate not worth three peppercorns, who cares more about putting twopence in his purse than keeping us alive? He sits grinning at home, and pockets more money a day than other people have for a fortune. I happen to know where he came by a thousand in gold. If we had any spunk in us he would not be so pleased with himself. Nowadays people are lions in their own houses, and foxes out of doors. I have already eaten my rags, and if these prices keep up I shall have to sell my cottages. Whatever is to happen if neither the gods nor man will take pity on this town? As I hope to have joy of my children, I believe all these things come from Heaven.

[1] In this game one player quickly exposed a number of fingers which the other, sitting opposite and holding his disengaged hand, had *simultaneously* to guess. Cheating was easy, even in daylight.

[2] The Asiatic style of oratory (see p. 444) was anything but straightforward. The speaker is airing an insufficient knowledge.

For no one now believes that the gods are gods. There is no fasting done, no one cares a button for religion: they all shut their eyes and count their own goods. In old days the mothers in their best robes used to climb the hill with bare feet and loose hair, pure in spirit, and pray Jupiter to send rain. Then it used promptly to rain by the bucket: it was now or never: and they all came home, wet as drowned rats. As it is, the gods are gouty in the feet because we are sceptics. So our fields lie baking——'

'Oh, don't be so gloomy,' said Echion, the old clothes-dealer. '"There's ups and there's downs," as the country bumpkin said when he lost his spotted pig.'

(§§ 44–5, tr. M. Heseltine.)

Later Niceros, another guest, is prevailed upon by his host to tell a stock anecdote:

'WHILE I was still a slave, we were living in a narrow street; the house now belongs to Gavilla. There it was God's will that I should fall in love with the wife of Terentius the inn-keeper; you remember her, Melissa of Tarentum, a pretty round thing. Now one day her husband died on the estate.[1] So I buckled on my shield and greaves, and schemed how to come at her: and as you know, one's friends turn up in tight places. My master happened to have gone to Capua to look after some silly business or other. I seized my opportunity, and persuaded a guest in our house to come with me as far as the fifth milestone. He was a soldier, and as brave as Hell. So we trotted off about cockcrow; the moon shone like high noon. We got among the tombstones:[2] my man went aside to look at the epitaphs, I sat down with my heart full of song and began to count the graves. Then when I looked round at my friend, he stripped himself and put all his clothes by the roadside. My heart was in my mouth, but I stood like a dead man. He made a ring of water round his clothes and suddenly turned into a wolf. Please do not think I am joking; I would

[1] Terentius was a slave managing the tavern for his master. (M.H.)
[2] They would be by the roadside. (M.H.)

not lie about this for any fortune in the world. But as I was saying, after he had turned into a wolf, he began to howl, and ran off into the woods. At first I hardly knew where I was, then I went up to take his clothes ; but they had all turned into stone. No one could be nearer dead with terror than I was. But I drew my sword and went slaying shadows all the way till I came to my love's house. I went in like a corpse, and nearly gave up the ghost, the sweat ran down my legs, my eyes were dull, I could hardly be revived. My dear Melissa was surprised at my being out so late, and said, ' If you had come earlier you might at least have helped us ; a wolf got into the house and worried all our sheep, and let their blood like a butcher. But he did not make fools of us, even though he got off ; for our slave made a hole in his neck with a spear.' When I heard this, I could not keep my eyes shut any longer, but at break of day I rushed back to my master Gaius's house like a defrauded publican, and when I came to the place where the clothes were turned into stone I found nothing but a pool of blood. But when I reached home my soldier was lying in bed like an ox, with a doctor looking after his neck. I realized that he was a werewolf, and I never could sit down to a meal with him afterwards, not if you had killed me first.'

(§§ 61–2, tr. M. Heseltine.)

Trimalchio can cap this with tales of witchcraft—a straw-changeling, &c. ; but the story of his own life is perhaps more interesting. It is punctuated with side-thrusts at his wife Fortunata, who had engaged him in a drunken brawl, and received not only a goblet in the face, but a threat that her statue should have no place upon his tomb. Habinnas (a monumental mason) has tried to restore the peace, but her outcry is still audible as the threat is driven home and Trimalchio proceeds :

' IS that your feeling, my high-heeled hussy ? I advise you to chew what you have bitten off, you vulture, and not make me show my teeth, my little dear : otherwise you shall know what my anger is. Mark my words : when once my mind is

made up, the thing is fixed with a ten-inch nail. But we will think of the living. Please make yourselves comfortable, gentlemen. I was once just what you are, but by my own merits I have come to this. A bit of sound sense is what makes men ; the rest is all rubbish. " I buy well and sell well " : some people will tell you differently. I am bursting with happiness. What, you snorer in bed, are you still whining ? I will take care that you have something to whine over. Well, as I was just saying, self-denial has brought me into this fortune. When I came from Asia I was about as tall as this candle-stick. In fact I used to measure myself by it every day, and grease my lips from the lamp to grow a moustache the quicker. Still, for fourteen years my master found me personable, and my mistress too. I say no more, I am not a conceited man. Then, as the Gods willed, I became the real master of the house, and simply had his brains in my pocket.'

(§§ 75–6, tr. M. Heseltine, abridged.)

He then describes how he built five ships to export wine to Rome. All were wrecked, but he built bigger and better and traded in wine, bacon, beans, perfumes, and slaves. ' Fortunata,' he adds, ' did the dutiful thing ' by selling all her jewellery and clothes for a hundred gold pieces, which were the leaven of his fortune :

' WHAT God wishes soon happens. I made a clear ten million on one voyage. I at once bought up all the estates which had belonged to my patron. I built a house, and bought slaves and cattle ; whatever I touched grew like a honey-comb. When I came to have more than the whole revenues of my own country, I threw up the game : I retired from active work and began to finance freedmen.[1] . . . Meanwhile I built this house while Mercury watched over me.[2] As you know, it was a tiny place ; now it is a palace. It has four dining-rooms, twenty bedrooms, two marble colonnades, an

[1] i. e. he lent them money, securing a clientèle and profits. Possibly the text should read ' employ freedmen as lending agents '. Usury was considered disreputable.

[2] Mercury was the god of business ; also of gain and good luck.

upstairs dining-room, a bedroom where I sleep myself, this viper's boudoir, an excellent room for the porter; there is plenty of spare room for guests. In fact when Scaurus[1] came he preferred staying here to anywhere else, and he has a family place by the sea. There are plenty of other things which I will show you in a minute. Take my word for it; if you have a penny, that is what you are worth; by what a man hath shall he be reckoned.'

(§§ 76–7 with omissions, tr. M. Heseltine.)

In the rest of the book many subjects germane to satire (including some forcible literary criticism) are interwoven with the romance. Thus when the body of Lichas, a sea-captain, is washed ashore, Encolpius, his late enemy, is moved to discourse in the moralizing manner, familiar in the satirists and Seneca, and transmitted unimpaired to Victorian novelists:

'IT is not the waves of the sea alone that thus keep faith with mortal men. The warrior's weapons fail him; another pays his vows to heaven, and his own house falls and buries him in the act. Another slips from his coach and dashes out his eager soul: the glutton chokes at dinner, the sparing man dies of want. Make a fair reckoning, and you find ship-wreck everywhere.'

(§ 115, tr. M. Heseltine.)

In the very next section the survivors of the storm enjoy a distant prospect of the city of Croton, and are advised by a farm-bailiff of what they may expect to find there:

'MY friends, if you are business men, change your plans, and seek some other means to secure your livelihood. But if you are men of any social pretension, and liars unabashed, you are on the short road to wealth. In this city the learned professions are not esteemed, eloquence has no place, simplicity and righteousness go unhonoured. I would have you know that in this city every man you see belongs to one of two classes—legacy-hunters or the hunted. In this city no one brings up children; for a man with heirs born of his blood has no seat

[1] A man of distinguished family from Rome.

at a dinner-party, none at the theatre ; he is excluded from all enjoyments and hides his head among the infamous. Those, on the other hand, who have never married and have no near kin, reach the highest dignities ; in fact they alone are considered soldierly, brave, or even honest. Your way will take you,' he went on, ' to a town like a plague-stricken country-side, where there is nothing but carrion in the rending and the crows who rend.' (§ 116.)

The simile of the ' body-bird ' is at least as old as Catullus. Petronius's method alone is new : it is that of Swift in *Gulliver's Travels* and a great improvement on the mythological scaffolding of Horace,[1] who had also classed legacy-hunting as a profession.

As in Swift, so in Petronius it is difficult to disengage the satiric thread from the romantic ; for it is always permissible to suspect some subtle twist of criticism or parody. But with this caution we may turn now to quotations that have a more innocent look :

THANKS to Giton, we found supper ready, and we were making a hearty meal, when a timid knock sounded at the door. We turned pale and asked who it was. ' Open the door,' said a voice, ' and you will see.' While we were speaking, the bar slipped and fell of its own accord, the door suddenly swung open, and let in our visitor. It was the veiled woman who had stood with the countryman a little while before. ' Did you think you had deceived me ? ' she said. ' I am Quartilla's maid. You intruded upon her devotions before her secret chapel. Now she has come to your lodgings, and begs for the favour of a word with you.' (§ 16, tr. M. Heseltine.)

In such passages we see Petronius as the ancestor of modern serial fiction ; and in the next we find him sketching low life with those touches of sordid detail that make the modern ' realist ' :

EUMOLPUS would not brook an insult ; he seized a wooden candlestick and followed the lodger out, and avenged his bloody forehead with a rain of blows. All the household ran up, and a crowd of drunken lodgers. I had a chance of punish-

[1] See p. 298 and cf. Hor. *Ep.* i. 1. 77.

ing Eumolpus, and I shut him out, and so got even with the bully. Meanwhile cooks and lodgers belaboured him now that he was locked out, and one thrust a spit full of hissing meat into his eyes, another took a fork from a dresser and struck a fighting attitude. Above all, a blear-eyed old woman with a very dirty linen wrap round her, balancing herself on an uneven pair of clogs, took the lead, brought up a dog of enormous size on a chain, and set him on to Eumolpus. But the candlestick was enough to protect him from all danger. We saw everything through a hole in the folding-doors, which had been made by the handle of the door being broken a short time before; and I was delighted to see him thrashed. (§§ 95–6, tr. M. Heseltine.)

But it would be a mistake to minimize the distance that separates the age of Nero from that of the railway bookstall. The absence of plot and the debased tone make a wide difference; so too the verse insets, which must not be forgotten.

The longest of these are put into the mouth of Eumolpus, an incontinent old poet who attached himself to the hero in a picture-gallery. A painting of the Sack of Troy occasions 65 iambic lines, followed by a hasty retreat from marks of public scorn; and later, on the road to Croton, 295 hexameters show how an epic of the civil war should be written. The iambics are said to be a parody of Nero's poem on the same subject: the others (which are tinged with satire) a parody of Lucan, though more probably they convey the ideas of Petronius himself. Of the remainder some are quotations, mock-heroics, or satires in miniature; and some carry a prose speech to its climax, or wing the utterances of passion. Most striking of all are the short descriptive pieces that lift the narrative to a jubilant strain beyond the compass of prose—the 'diversions on a penny whistle'. They have a peculiar charm, matched only in some other poems of Petronius that have accidentally survived; and yet reminiscent, very often, of the scenic settings found in Ovid. Here we approach a lover's trysting-place:

STATELY the plane-tree: the cypress is a-quiver:
Berried the laurel: the bobbed pine sways:
Brook in meander threads the summer shadow,
Froths at the pebbles, chiding their delays.

'Love houses here!' sing nightingale and swallow,
Philomel from wild-wood, *Procne* from the eaves—
Couched on the green-sward, soft among the violets,
Sing of pleasure stolen, lusty little thieves! . . .
She lay there, thrown idly down, her marble neck against a bed of gold, and was fanning her peaceful face with a spray of myrtle in flower . . . (§ 131.)

'Marble' and 'peaceful' are statuesque epithets and assort well with the details of a fuller likeness chiselled out just before:

WHATEVER I write must fall short of her. Her hair grew in natural waves and flowed all over her shoulders; her forehead was small, and her hair at the roots turned back from it; her brows ran to the edge of her cheekbones and almost met again close beside her eyes, and those eyes were brighter than stars far from the moon, and her nose had a little curve, and her mouth was the kind Praxiteles dreamed Diana had. And her chin and her neck, and her hands, and the gleam of her foot under a light band of gold! She had turned the marble of Paros dull. So then at last I put my old passion for Doris to despite . . . (§ 126, tr. M. Heseltine.)

Ovid would probably have painted in the colour of her hair and cheeks.

Nearly a century divides Petronius from the greatest of the romancers, LUCIUS APULEIUS, born about A.D. 125 at Madaura in Algeria. Besides his romance he has left us a speech made in his own defence on a charge of sorcery; some philosophical treatises;[1] and also the *Florida*, an anthology from speeches made on various occasions, in which we see him as the professional rhetorician, travelling the eastern Mediterranean and giving 'concerts in language'. One of these choice pieces—an oration of thanks to the senate of Carthage for decreeing a statue in his honour—provides a good example of the short story as cultivated in Rhetoric. An accident had interrupted the public appearances of

[1] See p. 482. An imaginative portrait of Apuleius's personality will be found in W. Pater's *Marius the Epicurean*, ch. xx.

Apuleius, and so gives excuse for a story of the Comic poet Philemon (fl. 330 B. C.), whose recitation had been cut short by a shower of rain :

PHILEMON, at the demand of various persons, promised to finish his recitation the next day without further postponement. On the morrow, therefore, a vast crowd assembled to hear him with the utmost enthusiasm. Everybody who could do so took a seat facing the stage and as near to it as he could get. Late arrivals made signs to their friends to make room for them to sit : those who sat at the end of a row complained of being thrust off their seat into the gangway ; the whole theatre was crammed with a vast audience. A hum of conversation arose. Those who had not been present the previous day began to ask what had been recited ; those who had been present began to recall what they had heard, and finally, when everybody had made themselves acquainted with what had preceded, all began to look forward to what was to come. Meanwhile the day wore on and Philemon failed to come at the appointed time. Some blamed the poet for the delay, more defended him. But when they had sat there for quite an unreasonable length of time and still Philemon did not make his appearance, some of the more active members of the audience were sent to fetch him. They found him lying in his bed—dead. He had just breathed his last, and lay there upon the couch stiff and stark in the attitude of one plunged in meditation. His fingers still were twined about his book, his mouth still pressed against the page he had been reading. But the life had left him ; he had forgotten his book, and little recked he now of his audience. Those who had entered the room stood motionless for a space, struck dumb by the strange suddenness of the blow and the wondrous beauty of his death. Then they returned and reported to the people that the poet Philemon, for whom they were waiting that there in the theatre he might finish the drama of his imagination, had finished the one true play, the drama of life, in his own home.

(*Flor.*, 16, tr. H. E. Butler.)

The back of the Stage, from a Sepulchral relief in the Brit. Mus.

A relief showing either a Public Recitation or an early Christian sermon

Museo Civico, Milan

In this passage Apuleius shows considerable restraint ; but his novel, the *Metamorphoses*, better known as *The Golden Ass*, is written in a very different manner. Much of it is as capable of poetic treatment as any tale in Ovid, and there is an exaltation in the climax that might well have found expression in verse. Instead he gives us a prose-poem ; for he lived in an age of prose.[1]

His eclectic style has points of contact with that of Fronto,[2] who led a revolt against Classicism similar in many ways to the ' Romantic Movements ' of modern Europe. Their methods helped to vindicate the Roman speech at a time when the best writing was finding its way into Greek ; but both were too ' precious ' in their diction and manner to make a sound tradition, and in ringing out the old Latin they were ringing in the new, that was to leave its monuments not in the ancient tongue but in the Romance languages. Apuleius rescued from oblivion choice words used by classical writers of all periods and degrees, and raised vulgarisms, old and new, to literary rank. His dissolute grammar and the diminutives he so much affects are reflections of the vulgar idiom, and combine with words and forms of his own invention to make a music of suspended cadences, or to elaborate the studied prettiness of assonance, alliteration, balance, and word-play—devices that were popular and peculiarly Italian, but had been suppressed among the educated for nearly three hundred years.[3]

The story of the Golden Ass is probably derived from a lost Greek work of unknown date, written by a certain Lucius of Patras, and entitled *Lucius or the Ass*. Of this a Greek abridgement exists, wrongly attributed to the famous essayist Lucian (second century A. D.), and certainly inferior both in imaginative power and in art to the Latin work. Apuleius differs also in linking to the narrative no less than seventeen incidental stories ; and presumably it is to these he refers when he states that his novel is written ' in the well-known Milesian manner '. The main

[1] Cp. E. E. Sikes, *Roman Poetry* (London, Methuen & Co., 1923), pp. 102–3, who says ' There is surely no clearer case of a poet repressed, if not crushed, by his Age '.

[2] See p. 351.

[3] Cf. M. D. Brock, *Studies in Fronto and his Age* (Cambridge, 1911), pp. 145 f. Some have held that the strange style is of purely African growth and owes much of its oriental wealth of colour to Semitic influences. But probably ' we are confronted with no more than an exaggerated revival of the Asiatic style of oratory '. (Cf. Apuleius, *Apologia and Florida*. Tr. by H. E. Butler (Oxford, 1909), Introd., p. 17.)

plot describes the adventures of Lucius, whom we find travelling in Thessaly—the most bewitched of all lands under the moon; for 'all the more genuine appliances of the black art, once practised there by Medea, were still in use'. This is plainly shown by the tale of a travelling companion who beguiled the way to Hypata, leaving Lucius politely credulous of magic and curious to learn more. Here Lucius gives his first impressions of the city:

IN the city of Hypata nothing seemed to be its true self. You might think that through the murmuring of some cadaverous spell all things had been changed into forms not their own; that there was humanity in the hardness of the stones you stumbled on; that the birds you heard singing were feathered men; that the trees around the walls drew their leaves from a like source. The statues seemed about to move, the walls to speak, the dumb cattle to break out in prophecy; nay! the very sky and the sunbeams, as if they might suddenly cry out.'

(ii. 1, tr. W. Pater.)

In this city Lucius stays with the skin-flint Milo and his wife Pamphile, but dines on occasion at the house of a rich kinswoman Byrrhaena. There his curiosity is whetted by the tale of Thelyphron, a Milesian, who relates the adventure which cost him his ears and nose:

I FORTUNED in an evil hour to come to the city Larissa, where, while I went up and down to view the streets, to take some relief for my poor estate (for I had spent near all my money), I espied a tall old man standing upon a stone in the midst of the market-place, crying with a loud voice, and saying that if any man would watch a dead corpse that night he should be rewarded and a price be fixed for his pains. Which when I heard I said to one that passed by: 'What is here to do? Do dead men use to run away in this country?' Then answered he: 'Hold your peace; for you are but a babe and a stranger here, and not without cause you are ignorant how you are in Thessaly, where the women witches do bite off by morsels the flesh of the

faces of dead men, and thereby work their sorceries and enchantments.' 'Then,' quoth I, 'in good fellowship tell me the order of this custody of the dead and how it is?' 'Marry,' quoth he, 'first you must watch all the night, with your eyes staring and bent continually upon the corpse, without winking, never looking off nor even moving aside: for these witches do change their skin and turn themselves at will into sundry kinds of beasts, whereby they deceive the eyes even of the sun and of very Justice; sometimes they are transformed into birds, sometimes into dogs and mice, and sometimes into flies; moreover they will charm the keepers of the corpse asleep, neither can it be declared what means and shifts these wicked women do use to bring their purpose to pass: and the reward for such dangerous watching is no more than four or six pieces of gold. But hearken further, which I had well nigh forgotten, if the keeper of the dead do not render on the morning following the corpse whole and sound as he received the same, he shall be punished in this sort. That is; if the corpse be diminished or spoiled in any part, the same shall be diminished and spoiled in the face of the keeper to patch it up withal.' (ii. 21–2, tr. Adlington.[1])

Thelyphron undertook the night-watching: and when the widow, with seven witnesses, had made careful inventory of the features of her dead, was left to his task with an oil-lamp for comfort:

NOW when I was alone to keep the corpse company, I rubbed mine eyes to arm them for watching, and to the intent that I would not sleep I solaced my mind with singing, and so I passed the time till it was dark, and then night deeper and deeper still, and then midnight, when behold, as I grew already more afraid, there crept in a weasel into the chamber, and she came against me and fixed a sharp look upon me and put me in a very great fear, in so much that I marvelled greatly of

[1] Revised by S. Gaselee, Loeb Edn. (London, W. Heinemann, 1915). Adlington's translation (1566) perhaps gives the best idea of the style of the original.

the audacity of so little a beast. To whom I said: 'Get thee hence, thou filthy brute, and hie thee to the mice thy fellows, lest thou feel my fingers. Why wilt thou not go?' Then incontinently she ran away, and when she was quite gone from the chamber I fell on the ground so fast in the deepest depth of sleep that Apollo himself could not well discern whether of us two was the dead corpse, for I lay prostrate as one without life, and needed a keeper likewise, and had as well not been there.

At length the cocks began to crow declaring night past and that it was now day, wherewithal I waked, and, being greatly afraid, ran unto the dead body with the lamp in my hand, and I uncovered his face and viewed him closely round about; all the parts were there: and immediately came in the wretched matron all blubbered with her witnesses, and threw herself upon the corpse, and, eftsoons kissing him, examined his body in the lamplight, and found no part diminished. Then she turned and commanded one Philodespotus, her steward, to pay the good guardian his wages forthwith, which when he had done, he said: 'We thank you, gentle young man, for your pains, and verily for your diligence herein we will account you as one of the family.'

Whereupon I, being joyous of my unhoped gain, and rattling my money in my hand, as I gazed upon its shining colour, did answer: 'Nay, madam, I pray you, esteem me as one of your servitors; and as often as you need my services at any time I am at your commandment.'

(ii. 25–6, tr. Adlington.)

These ill-omened words caused him some rough-handling by the servants, but worse was to follow. At the funeral an uncle of the dead man accused the widow of murder, and prevailed upon Zatchlas, an Egyptian priest, to recall the corpse to momentary life for the sake of his testimony. The miracle is performed: but the revived man seeks only rest. At last he is threatened by Zatchlas with the tortures of Hell, and then declares that his wife had poisoned him to make room for a lover. There follows a denial by the woman—and now Thelyphron continues:

THE people were in a turmoil and divided in sundry ways; some thought best the vile woman should be buried alive with her husband, but some said there ought no credit to be given unto the dead body that spake falsely: which opinion was clean taken away by the words which the corpse spoke again with deeper groaning, and said: 'Behold, I will give you an evident token, which never yet any other man knew, whereby you shall perceive that I declare the truth,' and by and by he pointed towards me that stood on the stone, and said: 'When this, the good guardian of my body, watched me diligently in the night, and the wicked witches and enchantresses came into the chamber to spoil me of my limbs, and, to bring such their purpose to pass, did transform themselves into the shape of beasts; and when they could in no wise deceive or beguile his vigilant eyes they cast him at last into so dead and sound a sleep that by their witchcraft he seemed without spirit or life. After this they called me by my name, and did never cease till the cold members of my body began by little and little to revive to obey their magic arts: then he, being lively indeed, howbeit buried in sleep, because he and I were named by one name, rose up when they called, and walked as one without sense like some lifeless ghost: and they, though the door was fast closed, came in by a certain hole and cut off first his nose and then his ears, and so that butchery was done to him which was appointed to be done to me. And that such their subtlety might not be perceived, they made him very exactly a like pair of ears of wax, and fitted it exactly upon him, and a nose like his they made also, wherefore you may see that the poor wretch for his diligence hath received no reward of money, but loss of his members.

Which when he had said I was greatly astonished, and (minding to feel my face) put my hand to my nose, and my nose fell off, and put my hand to my ears, and my ears fell off. Whereat all the people pointed and nodded at me, and laughed me to scorn: but I (being stricken in a cold sweat) crept between their legs for shame and escaped away. (ii. 29–31, tr. Adlington.)

Touches of humour enliven the narrative; and there is more than a hint of satire on the belief in witchcraft prevalent at the time—for Apuleius knew his magic from within. Before long Lucius, by misapplying the secret arts of Pamphile (herself a witch), becomes not like her, an owl, but the very sum and substance of an ass; and so gives the book its name. He needs only a mouthful of roses to restore his proper shape, but by a series of mischances the restoration is deferred. Meanwhile robbers sack the house of Milo; and Lucius, burdened with the miser's gold, is cudgelled to their mountain fastness. There three stories of brigandage are recounted, and presently a maiden, seized on her wedding-day, is added to the spoils. It is for her comfort that a drunken old crone tells the Milesian tale of 'Cupid and Psyche', (iv. 28–vi. 24) unique not only in its charm but in another way as well; for in spite of its colouring as an erotic romance, from the opening sentence 'Once upon a time there lived a king and queen . . .' to the happy reunion of the lovers at the end, it remains a true fairy-tale, and as such has no parallel in classical literature.

The worship of Venus had been injured by the loveliness of the young princess Psyche, whom Cupid was ordered to afflict with some unworthy passion. She lived admired but unloved; and soon her parents were ordered by Apollo's oracle to expose her on a high hill, for marriage to 'that serpent thing by reason of whom even the gods tremble and the shadows of Styx are afraid'. She was in great fear; but found herself transported to a fairy palace, and there lived in rich content with a bridegroom who came and went in darkness. Then two sisters, grown jealous, persuaded her that the husband she had never seen was a monster, not a man. She must conceal a lamp and a knife at the bedside, and strike off its head while it slept. Psyche takes their advice:

WITH lamp plucked forth, knife in hand, she put by her sex; and lo! as the secrets of the bed became manifest, the sweetest and most gentle of all creatures, Love himself, reclined there, in his own proper loveliness. At sight of him the very flame of the lamp kindled more gladly! But Psyche was afraid at the vision, and, faint of soul, trembled back upon her knees, and would have hidden the steel in her own bosom. But the knife slipped from her hand; and now, undone, yet ofttimes looking upon the beauty of that divine countenance,

she lives again. She sees the locks of that golden head, pleasant with the unction of the gods, shed down in graceful entanglement behind and before, about the ruddy cheeks and white throat. The pinions of the winged god, yet fresh with the dew, are spotless upon his shoulders, the delicate plumage wavering over them as they lie at rest. Smooth he was, and, touched with light, worthy of Venus his mother. At the foot of the couch lay his bow and arrows, the instruments of his power, propitious to men.

And Psyche, gazing hungrily thereon, draws an arrow from the quiver, and trying the point upon her thumb, tremulous still, drave in the barb, so that a drop of blood came forth. Thus fell she, by her own act, and unaware, into the love of Love. Falling upon the bridegroom, with indrawn breath, in a hurry of kisses from eager and open lips, she shuddered as she thought how brief that sleep might be. And it chanced that a drop of burning oil fell from the lamp upon the god's shoulder. Ah! maladroit minister of love, thus to wound him from whom all fire comes; though 'twas a lover, I trow, first devised thee, to have the fruit of his desire even in the darkness! At the touch of the fire the god started up, and, beholding the overthrow of her faith, quietly took flight from her embraces.

And Psyche, as he rose upon the wing, laid hold on him with her two hands, hanging upon him in his passage through the air, till she sinks to the earth through weariness. And as she lay there, the divine lover, tarrying still, lighted upon a cypress tree which grew near, and from the top of it spake thus to her, in great emotion: 'Foolish one! unmindful of the command of Venus, my mother, who had devoted thee to one of base degree, I fled to thee in his stead. Now know I that this was vainly done. Into mine own flesh pierced mine arrow, and I made thee my wife, only that I might seem a monster beside thee—that thou shouldst seek to wound the head wherein lay the eyes so full of love to thee! Again and again I thought to put thee on thy guard concerning these things, and warned thee in loving-kindness.

Now I would but punish thee by my flight hence.' And therewith he winged his way into the deep sky.

Psyche, prostrate upon the earth, and following far as sight might reach the flight of the bridegroom, wept and lamented; and, when the breadth of space had parted him wholly from her, cast herself down from the bank of a river which was nigh. But the stream, turning gentle in honour of the god, put her forth again unhurt upon its margin. And as it happened, Pan, the rustic god, was sitting just then by the waterside, embracing, in the body of a reed, the goddess Canna; teaching her to respond to him in all varieties of slender sound. Hard by, his flock of goats browsed at will. And the shaggy god called her, wounded and outworn, kindly to him and said, 'I am but a rustic herdsman, pretty maiden, yet wise, by favour of my great age and long experience; and if I guess truly by those faltering steps, by thy sorrowful eyes and continual sighing, thou labourest with excess of love. Listen then to me, and seek not death again, in the stream or otherwise. Put aside thy woe, and turn thy prayers to Cupid. He is in truth a delicate youth: win him by the delicacy of thy service.' (v. 22–5, tr. W. Pater.)

The rest of the story—of perilous tasks set by Venus, and kindly beasts who helped Psyche to perform them—may be read in the same translation,[1] or in the verses of William Morris and Robert Bridges. We must return now to Lucius the Ass, whom we find, after many adventures, sold to a miller and turning the mill. Apuleius gives us here one of those stark descriptions of the world as it was that have both an interest of their own and serve also to make his unrealities almost credible. Lucius is speaking:

O GOOD Lord, what a sort of poor slaves were there; some had their skin bruised all over black and blue, some had their backs striped with lashes and were but covered rather than clothed with torn rags, some had their members

[1] *Marius the Epicurean*, ch. v. Adlington's version will be found in the Loeb edn., or edited (together with some other tales from Apuleius) by W. H. D. Rouse in the King's Classics Series (A. Moring, Ltd., London, 1904).

only hidden by a narrow cloth, all wore such ragged clouts that you might perceive through them all their naked bodies, some were marked and burned in their forehead with hot irons, some had their hair half clipped, some had shackles on their legs, ugly and evil-favoured, some could scarce see, their eyes and faces were so black and dim with smoke, their eyelids all cankered with the darkness of that reeking place, half blind and sprinkled black and white with dirty flour like boxers which fight together befouled with sand. But how should I speak of the horses my companions, how they, being old mules or weak horses, thrust their heads into the manger and ate the heaps of straws? They had their necks all wounded and worn away with old sores, they rattled their nostrils with a continual cough, their sides were bare with continual rubbing of their harness and great travail, their ribs were broken and the bones did show with perpetual beating, their hoofs were battered very broad with endless walking, and their whole skin ragged by reason of mange and their great age. When I saw this dreadful sight . . . I saw no comfort or consolation of my torments, saving that my mind and my inborn curiosity was somewhat recreated to hear and understand what every man said and did, for they neither feared nor doubted my presence. (ix. 12–13, tr. Adlington.)

There are many other scenes which give a vivid impression of contemporary life—but mainly of low life, as befits the station of an ass; and most of the tales that Lucius overhears reflect the morbid sensationalism of common folk. We seem to move through the tinsel and tinklings and raffish humanity of an old-world fair, with a guide who leaves no side-show or chamber of horrors unexplored. It is true that 'Cupid and Psyche' does much to relieve the narrative; and shorter tales of the merrier Milesian kind found no less favour in Thessaly, where laughter was honoured as a god.[1] But in spite of these interludes and a constant humour of situation the annals of crime become more and more wearisome and crowd closer than ever in Books ix and x.

The last book is a welcome change. The human appetites

[1] ii. 31–iii. 12.

and intelligence of Lucius have been discovered : he is now a Performing Ass, grown sleek with good living. But this career threatens a degradation more monstrous than all, from which he is saved only by flight. After his escape, as he lay tired and wakeful on the sea-shore, he saw the Moon, ' the Queen of Heaven and Mother of all things,' now rising at her full ; and, when he had purified himself in the salt water, prayed to her for release from his bestial shape. In a vision the Moon-goddess declared to him her true name, Isis, and promised him a change of fortune on the morrow—her day of spring-festival. A priest should carry roses in his hand, and Lucius should be suffered to approach and eat. He should then be dedicated to her service, and enjoy in this world and the next the blessings of a devotee.

This is the first hint of the book's surprising end,[1] which tempts us to find an allegory throughout. For all at once the history of Lucius the Ass becomes a passage in the life of Lucius Apuleius of Madaura, himself a votary of Isis, and in later days High Priest of his African province. In becoming once more a man the hero puts off, as it were, the Ass of carnal beastliness ; and the dawn of his release is the light of religious revelation. Here the sunlight dances on a spring world to the gay tune in his heart :

SOON after the darkness was chased away and the clear and golden sun arose, when behold, I saw the streets replenished with people, going in a religious sort, and in great triumph. All things seemed that day to be joyful, as well all manner of beasts and the very houses, as also even the day itself seemed to rejoice. For after the hoar frost of the night ensued the hot and temperate sun, whereby the little birds, weening that the spring-time had been come, did chirp and sing melodiously, making sweet welcome with their pleasant song to the mother of the stars, the parent of times, and mistress of all the world. The fruitful trees also, both those which rejoiced in their fertility and those which, being barren and sterile, were contented at the shadow which they could give, being loosened by the breathing of the south wind, and smiling by reason of their new buds now appearing, did gently move their branches and render sweet pleasant shrills ;

[1] There is nothing of this kind in the Greek story.

' The Greeks and Romans were not jealous of strange gods '

A Roman relief of Priests and Priestesses of Isis

Photograph—Sansaini

the seas were quiet from the roaring winds and the tempests of great waves; the heaven had chased away the clouds, and appeared fair and clear with his proper light.

(xi. 7, tr. Adlington.)

It was a long procession, but Lucius had all the patience of curiosity. At last there came one who bore the venerable figure of the godhead, a gold vessel with a round bottom, 'made by a new invention, and therefore much to be admired'; and then:

FINALLY came he which was appointed to my good fortune, according to the promise of the most puissant goddess. For the great priest, which bare the restoration of my human shape, by the commandment of the goddess approached more and more, carrying in his right hand both the timbrel and the garland of roses to give me, which was in very deed my crown to deliver me from cruel fortune which was always mine enemy, after the sufferance of so much calamity and pain, and after the endurance of so many perils. Then I, not running hastily by reason of sudden joy, lest I should disturb the quiet procession with my beastly importunity, but going softly as a man doth step through the press of people, which gave me place by the divine command on every side, I went after the priest. Then the priest, being admonished the night before, as I might well perceive, and marvelling that now the event came opportunely to fulfil that warning, suddenly stood still, and holding out his hands thrust out the garland of roses to my mouth: which garland I (trembling and my heart beating greatly) devoured with a great affection. As soon as I had eaten them, I was not deceived of the promise made unto me: for my deform and assy face abated, and first the rugged hair of my body fell off, my thick skin waxed soft and tender, my fat belly became thin, the hoofs of my feet changed into toes, my hands were no more feet but returned again to the work of a man that walks upright, my neck grew short, my head and mouth became round, my long ears were made little, my great and stony teeth waxed less, like the teeth of men, and my

tail, which before cumbered me most, appeared nowhere. Then the people began to marvel, and the religious honoured the goddess for so evident a miracle.

(xi. 12–13, tr. Adlington.)

So our sketch of Latin story-telling might end where it began, with a metamorphose. But we must escort Lucius to the end of the book. After his initiation—at no small expense—the goddess bade him to Rome, where he worshipped at her shrine and recovered his fortunes by practice at the Bar. Presently new visions, adroitly interpreted by the priests, persuaded a second initiation, this time into the mysteries of Osiris, who bestowed on him a priesthood of singular distinction. 'Wherefore' (he says), 'I executed mine office in great joy with a shaven crown in that most ancient college which was set up in the time of Sulla, not covering or hiding the tonsure of my head, but showing it openly to all persons.' (xi. 30, tr. Adlington.)

NOTE to p. 251.

Thomas Hardy's 'Voices from Things Growing' (*London Mercury*, Dec. 1921, p. 119) is one among many examples of the idea of metempsychosis in modern poetry. There is something of Ovid's Daphne in this stanza :

> The Lady Gertrude, proud, high-bred,
> Sir or Madam,
> Am I—this laurel that shades your head ;
> Into its veins I have stilly sped,
> And made them of me ; and my leaves now shine,
> As did my satins superfine,
> All day cheerily,
> All night eerily.

SATIRE

As if to assert its independence, Satire, in contrast with other genres, bears not a Greek but a Latin name. It owes something, as we shall see, to Greece; but may rightly be called the most original creation of the Roman mind. It was also the most characteristic; for it allowed free play to the livelier side of the national genius, and yet, as a criticism of real life, had a ballast of hard utility. With modern satire its connexion is partly accidental. *Satura* meant, in its origin, nothing more than a medley or miscellany, as various in subject-matter as in form and tone. No doubt it was always flavoured with 'sharp Italian wit'; but even that was not required by the title.

The first writer of literary[1] saturae was Quintus Ennius (239–169 B.C.[2]). Little remains of his four books; but we know that he used a variety of metres, including the hexameter, and can trace in his work many elements reproduced by his successors. Among these are a dialogue, a fable, and some gastronomic precepts, all drawn from Hellenistic sources: also anecdote, moral maxims, character-sketch, and Greek natural philosophy in a popular setting. There are, too, a few personal touches, e.g. 'I never write poetry unless I have the gout', which foreshadow the candid reflexions of Lucilius and Horace. He wrote without acrimony, for his position was not independent, and he lived in a complacent age. The satires of his nephew, the tragedian Marcus Pacuvius (220–132 B. C.[3]), were probably of the same innocent kind.

The next of the satirists is GAIUS LUCILIUS (180–102 B.C.[4]). Nearly two centuries after his death readers were still to be found who placed him at the head of all Latin poets, and others who at least preferred him in satire to Horace. He was the first 'to take the public into his confidence'; the first outspoken critic of men and manners; and above all, he was essentially a national poet, who wrote for his countrymen at large and struck just those notes, whether of ridicule or gravity, to which they alone could properly respond. Probably, too, he was thought of as the inventor of something new to the literature

[1] There is some reason—perhaps insufficient—for believing that the earliest *Saturae* were of a rude dramatic character, resembling, if not identical with, the 'Fescennine verses' in which Italians of old days exchanged ribaldry and repartee.

[2] See pp. 18 ff., 130, 174 ff.

[3] See pp. 176 ff.

[4] See p. 355.

of the world. He owed something in the way of inspiration and suggestion to the Old Attic Comedy (*c.* 460–404), and more to those Hellenistic writers who provided Roman satirists from Ennius onwards with stock themes and characters and not a little of their ethical teaching.[1] But his personal strictures are not easily matched; and in making a prevalent use of the hexameter he was also the author of a metrical convention. Roman satire can claim that there is nothing in Greek which embraces the same variety of subject and mood in the same singleness of form.

The numerous fragments of his thirty books are a poor index of his genius: his best monument is the work of the later satirists and the homage they pay. In their pages reappear his attacks on those social and moral vices which represent (in Sellar's words) 'the two extremes to which the Roman temperament was most prone, rapacity and meanness in gaining money, vulgar ostentation and coarse sensuality in using it'. Possibly a few quotations, even in translation, may give some slight idea of his style. We have, for example, these four lines on a miser:

HACK, serving-man, companion, he has none;
His money-bag and coin he bears alone;
Dines with the bag, sleeps, bathes: to shoulder tied
Carries the bag,—and all his soul inside!

(Ed. F. Marx, 243–6.)

The repetition of the word 'bulga' (bag) is a typical Lucilian device, crude but vigorous. Another fragment records a rebuke addressed to a glutton:

PUBLIUS Sink-pit Gallonius, my poor friend!
You've never known good fare (says he,) who spend
On shell-fish and a sturgeon overgrown,
That make your supper, every cent you own!

(Ibid., 1238–40.)

Laelius, a man of simple life, and boon companion of Scipio Aemilianus, may well have been the speaker. Lucilius was

[1] Specific debts to particular Greek authors of the late fourth and the third century B.C. can sometimes be named, but such authors are rarely extant. In a more general way the character-sketch, the New-Comedy (*c.* 336–250 B.C.), and the mime all contributed something to the making of Roman satire; and much of its ethical teaching was derived from the 'diatribes' or popular discourses of strolling philosophers. These were often imaginary dialogues; and had counterparts in verse.

familiar with both. He became a warm partisan, and made those violent attacks on Scipio's opponents to which Persius has borne witness :

> When vice appeared,
> Lucilius o'er the town his falchion reared ;
> On Lupus, Mucius, poured his rage by name,
> And broke his grinders on their bleeding fame.
> (*Persius*, i. 114–15, tr. Gifford.)

But politics expanded into a larger patriotism. He scourged incapacity and corruption in high places with impartial zeal, and did not spare ' the mass of the people in their tribes '. There is a longish fragment on Virtue, which becomes more tolerable if we remember that it was written at the time when Rome ' in gaining the world was losing her soul '. It recalls some chapters of a book [1] dealing partly with British administration in India, and written round the text ' to be sure the object we aim at is good, and to weigh carefully the effectiveness and expense of the means '. Virtue, to Lucilius, is the perfect possession of this science, the fruit not only of practical wisdom but sound character. An attempt has been made to preserve the repetitions of the original and its alliterative effects, notably the hammer-strokes of the last two lines :

> VIRTUE, Albinus, is a power of Mind ;
> The several works and ways of human-kind
> Virtue appraises, with a judgement nice
> To weigh the worth of things, and proper price.
> Virtue knows good and evil, true and base ;
> Profit, unprofit ; good report, disgrace ;
> Virtue defines true gain, and draws its bound ;
> Virtue rates riches at their price *per* pound ;
> Virtue by worth, not titles, metes reward ;
> Fights evil men and ways at home, abroad ;
> Right-living men, contrariwise, defends ;
> Exalts them, furthers, sorts with them as friends ;
> Bids us put first the profit of the Town,
> Our parents' profit next, and last our own.
> (1326–38.)

[1] *Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity*, by J. Fitzjames Stephen (Thacker, Spink & Co.), 1873. Cf. pp. 49, 69, 75.

In another place he deplores the growing taste for forensic oratory, reminding us of Cato, who had proposed paving the Forum with sharp stones for the discomfort of litigants :

ON work-day and on holiday, at early day and late,
The common folk foregather and the Fathers of the State ;
They bustle in the Forum, they never quit or part ;
Day-long one passion holds them, they follow but one art,—
To cheat with circumspection, to fight a crooked fight,
To play the honest patriot, and be the most polite ;
To set their words in ambush, and let the world suppose
That Roman fellow-citizens no fellows are, but foes !
(1228–34.)

The force and sincerity of Lucilius may be admitted ; but the expression is diffuse and the technique rude. He had found Ennius ' cumbrous and grotesque ' ; but it is on the formal side that he himself is most exposed to criticism. ' What ', says Horace, ' could be expected of a man who, with the utmost complacency, would pour forth 200 verses an hour, standing all the time on one leg ? He is discursive, garrulous, too lazy to revise, a turbid torrent of fair waters mixed with foul.' Perhaps this fragment will illustrate Horace's remarks. Lucilius is addressing a friend who has failed to call and inquire after his health :

I'LL tell you how I am, though all unasked,—
Nor do you mean to ask ; but modern still
And modish, keep away, and wish the death
Of friends you *would* not visit when you *should* !
That jingle, ' would ' and ' should ', you may mislike,
As ' *clinquant d'Isocrate* ',[1] ' *propos volage* ',
And ' *pur enfantillage* ',—what if you do ?
I shall not scratch my head again for you. (181–8.)

The French must do duty for Greek, which Lucilius often uses,[2] though he is quick to satirize the affectation of Greek habits of life

[1] Isocrates (436–338 B.C.) was a Greek orator who affected a highly artificial style.

[2] Many Greek words had a popular currency, as they supplied defects in the technical vocabulary of Latin.

and thought. Philosophic quibbling and superstition are among the other follies of intellect which he exposes ; and he varies his fare with literary criticism, ridiculing, for example, the tragic compounds of Pacuvius by describing one of his heroines as

> Tortured with hunger, cold, unwashedness,
> Unbathedness, undouchedness, unkemptness.
> (599–600.)

or experimenting with compounds, whether by way of parody or not, as in another characteristic fragment :

> No wife for me, to fob me of my wealth !
> A silver-plate- | mantilla- | prodigal,
> An ivory-mounted-hand-glass- | prodigal !
> (682–3.)

He also found room for questions of grammar, orthography, and metre ; anecdote and narrative ; and even a whole book devoted to his mistress Collyra. The modern press is the nearest counterpart to *satura*, if we can imagine some journal of the Town reflecting a single personality as frank in self-revelation as any diarist.

After Lucilius satire bifurcates. The antiquarian MARCUS TERENTIUS VARRO of Reate (116–27 B.C.[1]) went back for his model to the cynic dialogues of Menippus [2] of Gadara, who had trifled suggestively with problems of social life and philosophy in a manner known to us only through his imitator Lucian (*circ.* A.D. 125–190). Varro is said to have composed 150 books of Menippean Satires, but only the subject-titles and some short fragments survive. A distinguishing mark of this type of satire is the use of both prose and verse : Seneca's *Apocolocyntosis* [3] and the *Satyricon* [4] of Petronius are off-shoots from the same branch.

Personal confidences do not seem to have been common in Varro's work, and he does not ' preach at or abuse '. At the most he shows a general moral antagonism to the new order of things both in literature and society, tempered by the mellow and genial wisdom of a scholar whose heart was in the country, and seems to have drawn from it a faith buoyant enough to outride the political conflicts of his time. These few scraps, reflecting a happier past, have still some warmth of colour about

[1] See pp. 357, 506 ff.
[2] Early third century B.C.
[3] See p. 299.
[4] See p. 257 ff.

them, and the last is touched with humour : ' So in the old days religion was held sacred and everything was holy.' ' The wife would spin her wool and keep her eye on the porridge-pot to see it didn't burn.' ' The visitor had the pantry, the locks and keys, the meat-racks, the wine-casks, at his disposal, . . . had the food in front of him, and sat well-fed at another's cost, without a thought for what's gone or what's to come, but with just one eye turned towards the kitchen door.' [1]

A late essayist has fortunately preserved a less broken series of quotations, gently didactic in character, and combining a certain liveliness of expression with an academic precision of manner. They also reveal something of the charm of Varro's personality, and of his qualities as a host (which are amply attested by Cicero) :

THERE is a witty paper of Varro's, to be found among his ' Satires of Menippus ', and entitled ' Know'st not the Joys that Vesper brings ? ' wherein he discourses on the dinner-party and its arrangements, and especially on the number to form an ideal party. This, he says, should begin with the Graces, and go as far as the Muses—that is, start at three and end with nine—so as to be at the smallest never smaller than three, at the most never more than nine. For that there be many, he says, is not convenient, seeing that you may not have a crowd without noise and crowding, and they nowhere recline, but either stand as at Rome, or sit as at Athens. Furthermore, he goes on, four points are necessary to make your dinner perfect and complete : good fellows to meet, good place and season to meet in, and a good table. Again, in the choosing of the guests, we should look for those who will neither chatter nor be mum, for eloquence befits the forum and the senate ; silence suits the bed-chamber, rather than the hall. Accordingly, he lays it down that the conversation on such occasions should deal, not with burning or intricate questions, but with pleasant and attractive topics, where utility should be blended with charm and pleasantness, so as to draw out the agreeable and amiable side of us.

[1] Merry, pp. 206, 209, 210, tr. R. J. E. Tiddy, ' Satura and Satire ', in *English Literature and the Classics* (Oxford, 1912), p. 208.

And this, says he, will come about if we converse on the subjects of every-day life, for the discussion of which we have no time in the press of business. Moreover, in the master of the feast, not elegance is required, but rather absence of meanness, and the readings should be not indiscriminate, but such as tend to the instruction and amusement of the hearers. He also prescribes what the dessert should be, using these words : ' those delicates will be most sugared wherein is least sugar, for dainties are but treasonable allies to a dainty digestion.'

(From Aulus Gellius, *Noctes Atticae*, xiii. 11, tr. H. C. F. Mason.)

In ' The Sixty-year-old ' Varro plays the part of a Roman Rip van Winkle, waking after a sleep of half a century to the Rome of Catiline ; and he may have employed that other common device of satirists by which the reader is transported to some Cloudcuckootown or Brobdingnag and shown from there the imperfections of his own world. ' Marcopolis ' gives his idea of a good State ; and in the ' Marcipor ', perhaps a dialogue between slave and master, some iambic lines are suggestive of a winged flight to another sphere :

'TWAS close about the night's noon-day ;
And now the Air, in rich array
Shot far and wide with glowing fires,
Displayed the dance of astral quires,—
When freezing rain-clouds. lightly driven,
Obscured the golden vault of Heaven !
Downforth on mortal souls they spout ;
From frozen Pole the winds brake out,
Sons of the North, in frenzied play :
Tiles, branches, brooms, they tear away ;
And we, in wreckage fallen, like storks
Whose balanced plumes the lightning-forks
In flame have blasted,—we from high
Ruined to earth most miserably.

(269–272.)

It is hard to represent the diction, which is a strange mixture of words common and poetic, old and new, and Greek roots latinized. Though Varro can parody the erotic poetasters of his day, his own technique was behind the times. In prose he reveals the Roman gift for epigram that was to have free play in Silver Latin—e. g. 'A fault in a wife must either be cured or endured; who cures it makes for himself a better wife; who endures it makes of himself a better man.'[1] But the author of 620 books on seventy-four different subjects was not a finished writer. Part of his object was to overcome the national distaste for speculative thought by presenting it in a humorous and popular form; yet his allusiveness and bilingual habits cannot have appealed to a wide public.

The Satires of QUINTUS HORATIUS FLACCUS (65–8 B.C.[2]) are among the earliest of his works, but give us of his best. He was a critical disciple of Lucilius, to whom he is largely indebted for subject-matter, situations, and characters.[3] His earlier pieces show an aggressive spirit and an occasional coarseness and archaism that are also suggestive of his master; but these disappear as his art develops. Personalities become fewer, and his ridicule is often levelled at himself—though of course the shot scatters. He corrects the discursiveness of Lucilius by the treatment in each piece of a set theme; and his other advances in the arrangement and expression of thought are so marked that Roman satire as a work of literary finish may almost be claimed as his creation. To write poetry was not his object. He expressly denies *satura* that title, and accommodates his diction and metre—the hexameter—to a conversational style;[4] yet the result is a model of concealed art that was never successfully reproduced. Perhaps his manner is best characterized by Persius:

> Sly Horace, while he strove to mend,
> Probed all the foibles of his smiling friend;

[1] From 'A Husband's Duties,' Fr. 83.

[2] See pp. 69 ff., 166, 338 ff., 364 ff.

[3] e. g. 'Gallonius'; see above, p. 282. How far he referred to living persons by name is not clear: in any case he succeeds in making his characters live.

[4] His satires are twice referred to under the name *Satura*: elsewhere they are called 'sermones'—conversations. He implies a debt to the Hellenistic writer Bion of Borysthenes (*c.* 250 B.C.) who combined an informal style with a broad and caustic wit.

Played lightly round and round the peccant part,
And won, unfelt, an entrance to his heart.
(*Sat.* i. 116–17, tr. Gifford.)

A largeness of temper and complete freedom from cant [1] have won for the *Satires* an influence denied, very often, to works of finer spiritual appeal.

It is doubtful if Horace's position and times allowed the same freedom of speech that Lucilius enjoyed; but in any case his method was different, and its effects are a tribute to his own practice of his constant precept—the avoidance of extremes. He differs also in choosing folly and bad taste as his proper quarry and in addressing himself not to a wide public but to a courtly and cultivated set. It is in self-revelation and a certain independence of character that the two are most alike.

To some readers he was less obviously the disciple of Lucilius than the critic, and so in the tenth satire of Book i he justifies himself, pointing out that, though Lucilius chose the right models, he had not learnt from them all he might:

YES, I did say that, view him as a bard,
Lucilius is unrhythmic, rugged, hard.
Lives there a partisan so weak of brain
As to join issue on a fact so plain?
But that he had a gift of biting wit,
In the same page I hastened to admit.
Now understand me: that's a point confessed;
But he who grants it grants not all the rest:
For, were a bard a bard because he's smart,
Laberius' [2] mimes were products of high art.
'Tis not enough to make your reader's face
Wear a broad grin, though that too has its place:
Terseness there wants, to make the thought ring clear,
Nor with a crowd of words confuse the ear:
There wants a plastic style, now grave, now light,
Now such as bard or orator would write,

[1] Cf. H. W. Garrod, *The Oxford Book of Latin Verse* (Clar. Press, 1912), p. vi.
[2] A Roman knight, who in 45 B.C. was compelled by Julius Caesar to act in his own mimes on the stage (see p. 169).

And now the language of a well-bred man,
Who masks his strength, and says not all he can :
And pleasantry will often cut clean through
Hard knots that gravity would scarce undo.
On this the old comedians rested : hence
They're still the models of all men of sense.

(i. 10. 1–17, tr. Conington.)

Next, a passage from the most famous of the narrative satires, describing an encounter with a bore :

ALONG the Sacred Road I strolled one day,
Deep in some bagatelle (you know my way),
When up comes one whose name I scarcely knew—
'The dearest of dear fellows! how d'ye do?'
He grasped my hand—'Well, thanks : the same to you.'
Then, as he still kept walking by my side,
To cut things short, 'You've no commands?' I cried.
'Nay, you should know me : I'm a man of lore.'
'Sir, I'm your humble servant all the more.'
All in a fret to make him let me go,
I now walk fast, now loiter and walk slow,
Now whisper to my servant, while the sweat
Ran down so fast, my very feet were wet.
'O had I but a temper worth the name,
Like yours, Bolanus!'[1] inly I exclaim,
While he keeps running on at a hand-trot,
About the town, the streets, I know not what.
Finding I made no answer, 'Ah! I see,
You're at a strait to rid yourself of me ;
But 'tis no use : I'm a tenacious friend,
And mean to hold you till your journey's end.'
'No need to take you such a round : I go
To visit an acquaintance you don't know :
Poor man! he's ailing at his lodging, far
Beyond the bridge, where Caesar's gardens are.'

[1] A choleric man, who would have given the bore short shrift.

'O, never mind: I've nothing else to do,
And want a walk, so I'll step on with you.'
Down go my ears, in donkey-fashion, straight;
You've seen them do it, when their load's too great.
'If I mistake not,' he begins, 'you'll find
Viscus not more, nor Varius,[1] to your mind:
There's not a man can turn a verse so soon,
Or dance so nimbly when he hears a tune:
While, as for singing—ah! my forte is there:
Tigellius'[2] self might envy me, I'll swear.'
He paused for breath: I falteringly strike in:
'Have you a mother? have you kith or kin
To whom your life is precious?' 'Not a soul:
My line's extinct: I have interred the whole.'
O happy they! (so into thought I fell)
After life's endless babble they sleep well.

(i. 9. 1–28, tr. Conington.)

The bore had preferred Horace's company to answering a summons in court, and was finally removed by the plaintiff. He had tried to obtain from Horace an introduction to Maecenas, observing

'He picks his friends with care, a shrewd, wise man.'

This takes us back to an earlier satire, in which Horace defends both himself and his patron against those who resented their intimacy. At first sight the defence looks self-complacent. But after all merit is the only true ground for patronage—and Horace is not afraid to say so. He then disarms an obvious criticism by attributing to his father's care any merit he possesses:

IF I have lived unstained and unreproved
(Forgive self-praise), if loving and beloved,
I owe it to my father, who, though poor,
Passed by the village school at his own door,

[1] The two sons of Vibius Viscus, a Roman knight, were among Horace's literary friends; so, too, Lucius Varius, who edited the *Aeneid* after Virgil's death.

[2] Hermogenes Tigellius was a musician whose taste frequently excites Horace's ridicule.

The school where great tall urchins in a row,
Sons of great tall centurions, used to go,
With slate and satchel on their backs, to pay
Their monthly quota punctual to the day,
And took his boy to Rome, to learn the arts
Which knight or senator to *his* imparts.
Whoe'er had seen me, neat and more than neat,
With slaves behind me, in the crowded street,
Had surely thought a fortune fair and large,
Two generations old, sustained the charge.
Himself the true tried guardian of his son,
Whene'er I went to class, he still made one.
Why lengthen out the tale? he kept me chaste,
Which is the crown of virtue, undisgraced
In deed and name: he feared not lest one day
The world should talk of money thrown away,
If after all I plied some trade for hire,
Like him, a tax-collector, or a crier:
Nor had I murmured: as it is, the score
Of gratitude and praise is all the more.
No: while my head's unturned, I ne'er shall need
To blush for that dear father, or to plead
As men oft plead, 'tis Nature's fault, not mine,
I came not of a better, worthier line.

(i. 6. 68–92, tr. Conington.)

From here we may pass conveniently to the fourth satire o the same book. Like two others, it is literary, and in part als apologetic, discussing the nature of Satire and its most appro priate form. Horace denies that his object is to inflict pain o gratify mere spite, and so continues:

BUT if I still seem personal and bold,
Perhaps you'll pardon, when my story's told.
When my good father taught me to be good,
Scarecrows he took of living flesh and blood.
Thus, if he warned me not to spend but spare

The moderate means I owe to his wise care,
'Twas, ' See the life that son of Albius leads !
Observe that Barrus, vilest of ill weeds !
An useful lesson this to all young heirs
To guard against extravagance like theirs.'

(i. 4. 103–111, tr. Conington.[1])

Later, he turns to his own method of self-discipline, and demands forgiveness for his most frequent offence :

THUS I grew up, unstained by serious ill,
Though venial faults, I grant you, haunt me still :
Yet items I could name retrenched e'en there
By time, plain speaking, individual care ;
For, when I chance to stroll or lounge alone,
I'm not without a Mentor of my own :
' This course were better : that might help to mend
My daily life, improve me as a friend :
There some one showed ill-breeding : can I say
I might not fall into the like one day ? '
So with closed lips I ruminate, and then
In leisure moments play with ink and pen :
For that's an instance, I must needs avow,
Of those small faults I hinted at just now :
Grant it your prompt indulgence, or a throng
Of poets shall come up, some hundred strong,
And by mere numbers, in your own despite,
Force you, like Jews, to be our proselyte.

(i. 4. 129–143, tr. Conington.)

The satires of the first book range in date from about 42–35 B.C.; those of the second from 34–30. It was in the winter of 38/37 that Horace first became friendly with Maecenas, and about four years later that he was presented with his Sabine farm. Success and the country suns so mellowed the complexion of his work

[1] The last two lines are taken from the version of F. Howes (1895).

that some critics have compared it with that of Varro. This passage from the sixth satire in Book ii contrasts his life at Rome and in the country :

AT Rome to bail I'm summoned. ' Do your part,'
Thou bidd'st me ; ' quick, lest others get the start.'
So, whether Boreas roars, or winter's snow
Clips short the day, to court I needs must go.
I give the fatal pledge, distinct and loud,
Then pushing, struggling, battle with the crowd.
' Now, madman ! ' clamours some one, not without
A threat or two, ' just mind what you're about :
What ? you must knock down all that's in your way,
Because you're posting to Maecenas, eh ? '
This pleases me, I own ; but when I get
To black Esquiliae [1] trouble waits me yet :
For other people's matters in a swarm
Buzz round my head and take my ears by storm.
' Sir, Roscius would be glad if you'd arrange
By eight a.m. to be with him on 'Change.'
' Quintus, the scribes [2] entreat you to attend
A meeting of importance, as their friend.'
' Just get Maecenas' seal attached to these.'
' I'll try.' ' O, you can do it, if you please.' . . .
And so my day between my fingers slips,
While fond regrets keep rising to my lips :
O my dear homestead in the country ! when
Shall I behold your pleasant face again ;
And, studying now, now dozing and at ease,
Imbibe forgetfulness of all this tease ?
O when, Pythagoras, shall thy brother bean,[3]
With pork and cabbage, on my board be seen ?

[1] Part of the Esquiline hill had been made into a fashionable quarter by Maecenas. It was once a burial-ground : hence the epithet ' black '.
[2] i.e. government clerks, often freedmen. Horace himself held a post of this kind and is regarded by the ' scribes ' as one of themselves.
[3] A reference to Pythagoras' theory of the transmigration of souls.

The hills around Horace's Sabine Farm

Photograph by Mr. R. Gardner

O happy nights and suppers half divine,
When, at the home-gods' altar, I and mine
Enjoy a frugal meal, and leave the treat
Unfinished for my merry slaves to eat!

(ii. 6. 23–39, 59–67, tr. Conington.)

The satire ends with a well-known fable:

ONCE on a time (as ancient legends tell)
A field-mouse welcomed to his humble cell
A mouse from town, old cronies both. Our host,
Of home-spun habit, quick to count the cost,
Yet, when occasion offer'd, could unbend,
And knew with open heart to greet a friend.
Now in his mouth he brings unstinted fare,
Long-bearded oats, with many a hoarded tare,
Scraps of half-nibbled pork, and grape sun-dried,
Hoping the varied meal his store supplied
Might tempt the squeamish palate of the cit,—
Whose lordly tooth disdained it, bit by bit.
Not so the master of the mansion; he,
On a fresh stubble bed reclin'd, makes free
With chaff and darnel, leaving all the best
In due politeness to his daintier guest.
At length the cit exclaims: 'I wonder how
You can live here, friend, on this hill's rough brow:
Do take my counsel; quit this brushwood den,
Run up to Town with me, and live with Men.
Come, make the most of life: remember all
Who live on earth are mortal, great and small:
And take, good sir, your pleasure while you may;
With life so short, 'twere wrong to lose a day.'
This reasoning made the rustic's head turn round;
Forth from his hole he issues with a bound,
And side by side they trip, resolved to creep
To the town-walls when all were fast asleep.

The midnight sky was bending over all,
When they set foot within a stately hall,
Where couches of wrought ivory had been spread
With gorgeous coverlets of Tyrian red,
And viands piled up high in baskets lay,
The relics of a feast of yesterday.
Placing the rustic on a sumptuous seat,
Himself officiates and prolongs the treat,
With busy speed from fish to pastry springs,
And like a saucy slave tastes all he brings.
The guest, rejoicing in his altered fare,
Assumes in turn a genial diner's air,
When hark! a sudden banging of the door:
Each from his couch is tumbled on the floor;
Half dead they scurry round the room, poor things,
While the whole house with barking mastiffs rings.
Then thus the rustic: 'Friend, excuse my haste;
Farewell! this life may suit a town-bred taste:
Remote from danger rather let me dwell
Cheer'd with a vetch-stalk in my wild-wood cell.'

(ii. 6. 80–117, tr. adapted from F. Howes and Conington.)

Three satires, in the tradition of Ennius' gastronomic precepts, are devoted to the pleasures and pains of the Table. They are written with appreciation of a good *menu*, but ridicule extravagance no less than meanness, and expose bad taste. Here Horace advocates a generous but simple life, quoting Ofellus, a farmer of the old type, whose land has passed to one of Octavian's veterans:

MY rule was never to exceed (he says)
My greens and smoke-dried flitch on common days:
And even if the friend I held most dear
Knock'd at my gate, unseen for many a year,—
Or if a neighbour on some rainy day
Dropt in to chat a leisure hour away,
We pledged it not o'er dainties fetch'd from town,

But the fat kid and barn-door fowl went down.
The cloth removed, grapes which myself had dried,
With figs and nuts, a plain dessert supplied:
And, as around the jocund grace-cup went,
'Fill' was the word and Shame the president:
Whiles Ceres worshipp'd with libations due—
(So might she still the full-ear'd crop renew!)
Bade us from toil a pleasing respite share
And smooth'd awhile the wrinkled brow of care.
Let Fortune rave and wanton as she list,—
From such a life how little can be miss'd!
Say, are our looks less blithsome or our frame
Less stout, my boys, since this new *stranger* came?
For view'd as property, the land, my sons,
Is neither his, nor mine, nor any one's.
He turn'd me out; and him his own excess
Or the law's quirks still shortly dispossess:
At best, stern Death's ejectment, soon or late,
Shall prove these acres but a life-estate.

(ii. 2. 116–132, tr. F. Howes.)

Horace was not, in any true sense, a philosopher; but he gave an added interest to moral philosophy, and we can see him in the *Satires* feeling his way from the Epicurean towards the Stoic faith. Elsewhere (II. vii.) Davus, one of his slaves, proves that the true philosopher alone is free: all other men, including Horace, are mastered by conflicting desires. Here Damasippus, ruined by his dealings in antiques, quotes the doctrine of a Stoic friend who had saved him from suicide. It is another paradox,—that the 'wise man' alone is free. This lively anecdote helps to illustrate the point:

OPIMIUS, who, with gold and silver store
Lodged in his coffers, ne'ertheless was poor
(The man would drink from earthen nipperkin
Flat wine on working-days, on feast-days thin),
Once fell into a lethargy so deep
That his next heir supposed it more than sleep,

And, entering on possession at his ease,
Went round the coffers and applied the keys.
The doctor had a conscience and a head:
He had a table moved beside the bed,
Poured out a money-bag, and bade men come
And ring the coin and reckon o'er the sum:
Then, lifting up his patient, he began:
'That heir of yours is plundering you, good man.'
'What? while I live?' 'You wish to live? then take
The necessary steps: be wide awake.'
'What steps d'ye mean?' 'Your strength will soon run short,
Unless your stomach have some strong support.
Come, rouse yourself: take this ptisane of rice.'
'The price?' 'A trifle.' 'I will know the price.'
'Eight-pence.' 'O dear, what matters it if I
Die by disease or robbery? still I die.'
'Who then is sane?' He that's no fool, in troth.
'Then what's a miser?' Fool and madman both.
(ii. 3. 142–159, tr. Conington.)

Last, a quotation from the fifth satire of Book ii, in which Horace makes his nearest approach to satire in the modern sense. It is devoted to legacy-hunting, a practice encouraged by the peculiar social conditions in Rome from the time of the late Republic. The setting is taken from the Underworld of the eleventh Odyssey. Ulysses asks the shade of the prophet Teiresias how he is to regain his fortunes on his return to Ithaca, and receives in reply precepts for winning the legacy of a childless old man:

TEIRESIAS. A shrewd old crone at Thebes (the fact occurred
When I was old) was thus by will interred:
Her corpse was oiled all over, and her heir
Bore it to burial on his shoulders bare:
He'd stuck to her while living; so she said
She'd give him, if she could, the slip when dead.

Be cautious in attack ; observe the mean,
And neither be too lukewarm, nor too keen.
Much talk annoys the testy and morose,
But 'tis not well to be reserved and close.
Act Davus in the drama : droop your head,[1]
And use the gestures of a man in dread.
Be all attention : if the wind is brisk,
Say, ' Wrap that precious head up ! run no risk ! '
Push shouldering through a crowd, the way to clear
Before him ; when he maunders, prick your ear.
He craves for praise ; administer the puff
Till, lifting up both hands, he cries ' Enough.'
But when, rewarded and released, at last
You gain the end of all your service past,
And, not in dreams but soberly awake,
Hear ' One full quarter let Ulysses take,'
Say, once or twice, ' And is good Dama dead ?
Where shall I find his like for heart and head ? '
If possible, shed tears : at least conceal
The tell-tale smiles that speak the joy you feel.

(ii. 5. 84–104, tr. Conington.)

This satire may be compared with Swift's *Advice to Servants*. It has an irony which is uncommon even in Juvenal.

The satire generally known as the ' Apocolocyntosis ' or ' Pumpkinification '[2] of the emperor Claudius (A. D. 41–54) takes us back to the Menippean type, in which prose narrative has interludes of verse. The authorship is uncertain, but there are as good reasons for assigning it to the philosopher LUCIUS ANNAEUS SENECA (ob. A. D. 65[3]) as to any one. The satire opens with the words ' I wish to place on record the proceedings in heaven October 13 last ', and then describes the fortunes of Claudius in his last hours on earth and in seeking admission to the place to

[1] The reference is uncertain. Davus was a common slave-name.
[2] See p. 254, n. 1.
[3] See pp. 181 ff., 336 ff., 476 ff., 487.

which good emperors go. The gods hold debate on his eligibility to become one of themselves. Out of regard for his kinship with the deified Augustus and Augusta it has been proposed ' that from this day forth the blessed Claudius be a god, to enjoy that honour with all its appurtenances in as full a degree as any other before him, and that a note to that effect be added to Ovid's Metamorphoses ' : [1]

THE meeting was divided, and it looked as though Claudius was to win the day. For Hercules [2] saw his iron was in the fire, trotted here and trotted there, saying, ' Don't deny me ; I make a point of the matter. I'll do as much for you again when you like ; you roll my log, and I'll roll yours : one hand washes another.' Then arose the blessed Augustus, when his turn came, and spoke with much eloquence. ' I call you to witness, my lords and gentlemen,' said he, ' that since the day I was made a god I have never uttered one word. I always mind my own business. But now I can keep on the mask no longer, nor conceal the sorrow which shame makes all the greater. Is it for this I have made peace by land and sea ? For this I have calmed intestine wars ? For this, laid a firm foundation of law for Rome, adorned it with buildings, and all that,—gentlemen, words fail me : there are none can rise to the height of my indignation. I must borrow the saying of the eloquent Messala Corvinus,[3] ' I am ashamed of my authority '. This man, my lords, who looks as though he could not worry a fly, used to chop off heads as easily as a dog sits down.' (§§ 9–10, tr. W. H. D. Rouse.)

Augustus (whose style is parodied) finds that Claudius, apart from physical disqualifications, has murdered far too many members of the Royal Family, and secures his banishment from heaven. Every shortcoming of Claudius is exposed to ridicule, most of all his stupidity. It was only when he saw his funeral train, wending its way from heaven to hell, that he ' knew that

[1] See p. 242.

[2] Though the son of Zeus, his mother was a mortal, and his elevation to divine rank had been resented, especially by Hera. See p. 251.

[3] He resigned his appointment to a high civil position within a week.

he was dead '. Finally he is sentenced—unheard, of course—to engage for ever in his favourite pastime, the rattling of dice, but with a proviso like that of the ' twisted cue and elliptical billiard balls ' :

FOR when he rattled with the box, and thought he now had got 'em,
The little cubes would vanish thro' the perforated bottom.
Then he would pick 'em up again, and once more set a-trying :
The dice but served him the same trick : away they went a-flying.
So still he tries, and still he fails ; still searching long he lingers ;
And every time the tricksy things go slipping thro' his fingers.
(§ 15, tr. W. H. D. Rouse.)

Probably the emperor was transformed into a pumpkin to escape, like Ovid's heroines, some ultimate indignity. But our manuscript ends with the arrival of Caligula, who proves Claudius his slave in virtue of many a flogging administered in the past, and makes him over as law-clerk to a freedman. The slang and colloquialisms of the piece are difficult to match outside Petronius: its parodies and irreverence look back to the Menippus whose laugh is heard in Lucian.

Of AULUS PERSIUS FLACCUS (A. D. 34–62 [1]) we are told that ' he was of the gentlest disposition, of a maidenly modesty, and exemplary in his dutiful affection for his mother, sister, and aunt '. Rejecting, not unwisely, all thought of an active life, he surrounded himself with a library that contained at his death no less than 700 volumes of the Stoic Chrysippus ; and, fired by the somewhat negative idealism of the Stoic creed, sought ardently to reform a world he did not know. As the result of reading the tenth book of Lucilius, in which the writer, after disparaging himself, extends the process more heartily to other authors, he was moved to select satire as his weapon. Horace, whom he seems to have known almost by heart, supplies him with many of his characters and incidents ; but he is very different from Horace in his priest-like zeal, which precludes all compromise in his moral teaching, and, in his outlook on life, detachment. It was only after his death, in his twenty-eighth

[1] See pp. 376–7.

year, that the Satires were published, a thin volume of six hexameter pieces, with a short prologue.

Persius lived at a difficult time. The Augustans had conquered for Rome almost every province of Greek literature; their age had been succeeded by no great movement of national life or thought of a kind to inspire new conceptions; and they invited imitation only to defy it. Poetry was content to revive the worn fields of their conquest with Audacity, and embellish them with flowers of Rhetoric; and as Rhetoric, since the loss of political freedom, had been more occupied with the manner than the matter of speech, it was prodigal of the flowers required. The First Satire is a protest against this literary decline, which Persius, like most Stoics, attributes to moral degeneracy, and an attendant dishonesty in criticism. Here he is addressing, in imagination, a titled composer who has been flattered by dependents into some self-esteem:

> YOUR table's laid: sow's-flesh, and piping hot.
> Enter your guest, shivering, poor fellow; gets
> A cast-off cloak for present. All at once
> 'Tell me,' you ask, '—you know how I love truth,—
> What says Rome of me?' Truth he cannot tell.
> *I'll* tell you. Ready?—'Bald-pate, you're a fool!
> Your paunch (eighteen good inches on the ribs)
> Was never built for verse!'
>
> —Ah, happy Janus,
> No waggish stork can chip you from behind,
> No fingers perk'd like some white ass's ears,
> No stretch of tongue to match Apulian dog's
> In thirsty weather! You, my high-born friends,
> Living with eyeless occiput, should learn
> To turn about, and face the back-stair gibe. (i. 53–62.)

A youthful twist of humour, a certain vivacity of phrase and description, the use of vulgar speech and even slang—all are apparent in this passage. It is also typical of Persius's use of metaphor, designed in some places to disguise a Horatian 'tag', in others to challenge the reader's learning and ingenuity, or prove the author's. Here we must know that Janus had two faces, looking forward and back; that various signs of mockery

were to tap the fingers against the hand in imitation of a stork's bill, to move them like ass's ears, or to put out the tongue ; and finally that an epithet in Horace makes the droughts of Apulia, in the dog-days, proverbial.

The remaining satires are all Stoic discourses, with human weaknesses for text. The quotation that follows is a development of the paradox that the man of perfect wisdom alone is free. Abrupt transitions of thought, and a form of dialogue in which (after the manner of a Stoic diatribe) the speakers are not clearly marked, often help to make Persius obscure. Here Avarice and Luxury, personified, are fighting to possess a merchant's soul. He is addressed first by Persius and then by the disputants in their turns as 'you' :

DAYBREAK. You're snoring, lumpish. 'Show a leg!'
Says *Avarice*, 'Up with you!' No answer. 'Up!'
—'No, no, I can't!' Comes nearer, 'ups' again.
—'Well, what's the matter?'—'Matter? Sir! Salt-fish
Begging a freight from Pontus[1]: beaver-oil,
Tow, ebony, frankincense, and glossy Coans[2]!
Be first with peppercorns: fresh peppercorns
The loaded camel brings, waiting his water.
Up with you! Buy or barter! Needs, forswear.'[3]
—'Forswear? But God will hear me?'—'Sorry fool!
Must live content to scrape salt-cellar through,[4]
Sick with the thumb-taste, if you'd square with God!'
You're up, and belted: wine-skins on the slaves,
Straps, everything. Quick aboard! No stopping now
Your tonnage built to scour Aegean leagues!
But comes sly *Luxury*,—'What? Off?' she asks,
Holding your button, 'Where, hot fool, and why?
It's masterful, this humour; needs, to cool it,

[1] The Black Sea. [2] i.e. fabrics from the island of Cos in the Aegean.
[3] Cp. Conrad, *Lord Jim*, ch. xxii: 'The passion for pepper seemed to burn like a flame of love in the breast of Dutch and English adventurers about the time of James the First. . . . For a bag of pepper they would cut each other's throats without hesitation, *and would forswear their souls*.'
[4] To 'scrape the salt-cellar with the thumb' or 'live on salt' were proverbial expressions for a life of extreme poverty or frugality.

More than one chemist's shop! What, *you* to sea?
Perched on a thwart, coiled cable at your back,
Tippling the flat Veientan, rank with pitch,
From a squab noggin[1]? And for what? To squeeze
Greedy percentages from your nursèd stocks,
Make five, by sweat, eleven!—My good Sir,
Spare yourself! Gather the rosebuds, you with me;
This life is ours to-day, ashes to-morrow,
A ghost, a tale that's told. Bear death in mind,
And live the merrier! Even as I speak
The light-heel'd hour is gone: present is past!'
Well, what to do? hooked here, hooked there, and torn
Two ways,—which tug to follow? Each in turn
Obeying, shirking, at the last you stand,
Deny one mistress flatly to her face,
And cry 'My chain is loosed!'—Alas, poor dog,
Struggling may slip the knot, but as you fly
The collar's fast, the chain's length drags behind!

(v. 132–160.)

When the satires were published they met with immediate acclamation, which has been echoed at intervals in the past and must be ascribed mainly to certain passages where Persius's broken rhythms gather volume and sound and seem (in spite of some rhetorical colouring) to be the expression of a passionate sincerity. Something of this feeling may be conveyed by the quotations which follow. The first is from a satire on the proper objects and methods of prayer. Mankind is here rebuked for offering gold to the gods as if they shared the cupidity of their votaries:

SOULS bowed to earth, empty of light divine!
Why bring our passions to the Immortals' shrine
And judge by ours their pleasure? O vile flesh,
That first with perfume spoilt the olive fresh,

[1] A poor kind of wine, drunk from a poor kind of ware. 'Squab noggin', a rendering borrowed from Conington, represents an archaic vulgarism in the original.

Pure wool with purples ; from the oyster tore
Its pearl, and raked raw clay for glowing ore !
We sin, we sin, yet gain our earthly ends ;
But temples rich with gold, my priestly friends,
Tell me, what profit they ? No more, believe,
Than dolls that growing girls to Venus give ![1]
Offer to Heaven what from a lordly dish
Dull-eyed Messala [2] cannot : be our wish
To show for sacrifice a heart that keeps
Good faith with God and man ; its inner deeps
Holy, its truth and honour tried by fire !
Grant this, and God shall grant me my desire
When at his shrine I supplication make,
Though all my offering be a barley-cake. (ii. 61–75.)[3]

The next is a passage from the Third Satire, which deals with the ' moral waste ' of life among those who have lost the true philosophy as guide, and the penalty they pay of knowing that ' it is too late to mend '. No lines in Persius have been more often quoted than those in which he invokes on tyrants the secret terrors of that knowledge :

GREAT Father of the Gods ! when ruthless kings
Fired inwardly by Passion's poison-stings
Wax hot in lust, be this one vengeance thine,—
Show to them Virtue's face, and let them pine
Rotten with longing for an old love lost !
What wrings the groan of torment innermost ?
No brazen bull [4] of Sicily loud with pain ;
No sword hung poised to cleave the neck in twain,

[1] Maidens dedicated their dolls to Venus on attaining womanhood. Similarly, the golden charm-case (bulla) worn by free-born boys was offered to the household gods.

[2] Refers probably to a notorious epicure of distinguished family.

[3] The translation is partly from Gifford's version.

[4] The allusion is to the brazen bull of Phalaris, tyrant of Agrigentum, in which men were roasted alive : their cries passed for the bellowings of the bull. Its first victim was Perillus, the inventor of the torture ; the last, Phalaris.

The purpled neck, at mercy of a thread
Slung from the golden traceries overhead ;[1]
Not these ! but that small voice a man may hear,—
' Lower I fall and lower, to ruin sheer,'
—And, stricken, pales within, nor dares to tell
His wife beside him whence the stroke befell.

(iii. 35–42.)

The Fifth Satire, from which our second quotation came, is modelled on the Seventh in Horace's second book ; but before turning to his main subject Persius makes a sincere acknowledgement to the great Stoic teacher Cornutus. Possibly he was thinking of Horace and his father when he was moved to write it :

WHEN first I laid the purple by[2]—and, free,
Yet trembling at my new-felt liberty,
Approach'd the hearth, and on the Lares hung
The bulla, from my willing neck unstrung ;
When gay associates, sporting at my side,
And the white boss, display'd with conscious pride,
Gave me, uncheck'd, the haunts of vice to trace,
And throw my wandering eyes on every face ;
When life's perplexing maze before me lay,
And error, heedless of the better way,
To straggling paths, far from the route of truth,
Woo'd, with blind confidence, my timorous youth,
I fled to you, Cornutus, pleased to rest
My hopes and fears on your Socratick breast ;
Nor did you, gentle Sage, the charge decline :
Then, dextrous to beguile, your steady line
Reclaim'd, I know not by what winning force,
My morals, warp'd from virtue's straighter course,

[1] The ' sword of Damocles '.

[2] i. e. when he exchanged the purple-striped dress of boyhood for the white ' toga ' of a man. The folds of the toga were gathered in a knot or ' boss ' on the left shoulder. On the ' bulla ', see p. 305, note 1.

While reason press'd incumbent on my soul,
That struggled to receive the strong control,
And took, like wax, subdued by plastick skill,
The form your hand imposed—and bears it still!
(v. 30–40, tr. Gifford.)

In another Horatian satire, on the reasonable enjoyment of wealth, Persius denounces the cupidity of an imaginary heir; but how different was his experience in fact! He bequeathed to his mother and sister 2,000,000 sesterces, begging them to give Cornutus 100,000, twenty pounds' weight of silver plate, and the whole of his library. Cornutus refused all except the books.[1]

DECIMUS JUNIUS JUVENALIS (*c.* 60–140 A.D.) has left sixteen satires, of which the last is incomplete. He is the most prolific of the verse satirists, yet in some ways the narrowest. Except in the eighth and some of the later pieces he tends to confine himself to an attack on vice and folly, delivered in a spirit of stormy pessimism. The variety and humour of Lucilius and Horace are missing; so, too, the informal charm of their manner and versification, for Juvenal's satires are set-pieces with more openly calculated effects. As a moralist he will not compare with Persius: he is more apt to expose vice than to enjoin virtue, and dwells too intimately on the exposure. All these are marked differences. Another, perhaps the most noticeable, is that he tells us nothing of himself.

None of the satires appeared before the third year of Trajan (A.D. 98–117), when the Roman world was looking forward with new hopes. Juvenal looks back, and flogs dead men of the reigns of Domitian and Nero. If we add that the whole cast of his work is rhetorical,[2] and that many of his themes are stock-subjects for declamation, grave doubts arise of his sincerity. Probably he is best thought of as a man of some bitter memories and a naturally satiric temperament, keenly aware of the perennial disorders of a great capital, yet forced by prudence to spare the living, and preferring historic 'scarecrows' to fictitious

[1] Cf. H. E. Butler, *Post-Augustan Poetry* (Clar. Press, 1907), p. 81.

[2] i.e. addressed to an auditor rather than a reader. He asks questions and exclaims; abounds in antitheses, and rounds off his topics with epigrams that seem to await (and generally deserve) applause. The statement of an ancient biographer, that he practised declamation until middle life before turning satirist, is easily believed.

names. The power of his writing argues something greater than mere rhetorical skill in making old themes new; and no one would dispute a genuine warmth of feeling for the poor and the oppressed. In detail his style shows all the faults of Silver Latin, but also its excellences in their highest development; and his command of the hexameter is unrivalled in post-Augustan poetry. If a man's posterity counts for anything, he is the greatest of the satirists: he is certainly the most 'modern' and the most quotable.

The First Satire sets the key for most of the rest. Disgusted, as Persius had been, at the trite mythologizing of contemporary poets, Juvenal was determined to look facts in the face, and to ask what they meant. Though nearer to Lucilius than Horace, he quotes the example of both; and, after parading a number of unlovely figures, approaches his climax. Ennius's gout was a kindlier muse than Juvenal's anger:

WHO would not, reckless of the swarm he meets,
Fill his wide tablets in the publick streets
With angry verse? when, through the mid-day glare,
Born by six slaves, and in an open chair,
The forger comes, who owes his lavish state
To a wet seal, and a fictitious date;
Comes, like the soft Maecenas,[1] lolling by,
And impudently braves the publick eye!
Or the rich dame, who stanch'd her husband's thirst
With generous bowls, but—drugg'd them deeply first!
Now, baffling old Locusta[2] in her skill,
She shows her simpler neighbours how to kill,
And bids them bear the spotted corpse along,
Nor heed the curses of the indignant throng.
Dare then, the deed that earns, and earns it well,
A crib in sea-clipt Gyara,[3] or the cell;

[1] The patron of Virgil and Horace. His effeminacy is freely referred to by post-Augustan writers.

[2] A Gallic woman who served Nero as court-poisoner and was executed by Galba.

[3] In the Aegean. Confinement in an island (with other penalties) was a common punishment in Imperial times.

'Tis crime gets Substance : let your crime be bold !
Virtue gets Praise,—and blows her nails for cold.
To crime men owe their manors, high commands,
Their Orbs, and antique plate with goat that stands
Boss'd to the life in silver ! Who shall sleep
When Roman wives their dark appointments keep
Led by the lure of riches,—and to whom ?
A husband's father in a husband's room !
When maid betrothed her maidenhood demeans,
And matrons look for gallants in their 'teens ?
How shall I sleep ? No sleep for honest eyes !
Anger shall give what mother-wit denies,
And pour, in Nature and the Nine's despite,
Such strains as I, or Cluvienus,[1] write !

(i. 63–80.)[2]

It is at the end of this satire that he states his resolve to assail only the dead 'whose ashes lie sepulchred beneath the Flaminian and the Latin roads'. The Fourth shows his skill in bringing the dead to life. A cabinet-council has been called to decide the proper treatment of a huge fish, sent, perforce, as a present to Domitian (A. D. 81–96). The entry of the courtiers is here described :

MONTANUS' belly next appear'd in sight,
Then, his legs tottering with the unwieldy weight,
Crispinus follow'd, daub'd with more perfume,
Thus early ! than two funerals consume.
Then Pompey, neater in the Royal game
Of cutting throats with a soft whisper, came.
Next Fuscus,[3] of the Marble Grange, whose meat
Fattened to make a Dacian vultures' treat ;

[1] A forgotten poet.
[2] Tr. by Gifford (1906), partly from the version of J. Bidle (1734).
[3] Prefect of the Praetorian Guard: killed in Domitian's Dacian wars, A. D. 86–8.

For Doom was waiting, with an order seal'd
To try his arm-chair tactics in the field.
Cautious Veiento next, and by his side
Bloody Catullus,[1] leaning on his guide ;
A sightless yet an ardent lover he,
Fired at the thought of charms he could not see ;
A prodigy, whose monumental crimes
Strike with amaze even these prodigious times,—
Blind toady, from a bridge-end beggar's stand
Rais'd to the Highest Murderer in the land !
True wheel-side cadger of the hill-top road,
Who'd blow his kiss to each descending load !
None dwelt so largely on the turbot's size,
Or raised with more applause his wondering eyes ;
But to the left (O treacherous want of sight !)
He pour'd his praise ;—the fish was on the right.
(iv. 107–21.) [2]

To Juvenal ' bad-form ' (no less than obesity) was the outward sign of a degenerate soul. He sets it on the same plane as bad morals, and judges both by the standards of Old Rome, so agreeable to those of Stoicism. The Eighth Satire, an expansion of the Stoic text that virtue is the one true nobility, takes us back to the two great roads, where we find Lateranus, a nobleman, and consul-elect of A. D. 65, profaning the monuments of a still remoter past—by driving his own gig ! Similarly Gracchus, in Satire ii, caps his abominable vices by appearing as gladiator in public shows. This provokes an appeal to famous shades :

THAT there be ghosts and regions underground,
That Charon's pole still plumbs the Stygian Sound,
Home of dark frogs, where thousands in a day
The souls in one small punt find passage-way,—
No one believes, or none who pays a fee

[1] Consul in A.D. 73, and was still living in 93. Like Pompey and Veiento, he was a notorious ' informer '.

[2] Tr. mainly from Gifford ; but in part also from the version of R. Duke in Dryden's *Juvenal* (1692).

At bath-house wicket where the child goes free.[1]
Yet grant the fable true, and then declare
What thoughts are theirs, those mighty men of war,—
Curius, the Scipios, Camillus' ghost,
Fabricius, Fabii of Crémera's[2] host,
All our young chivalry at Cannae slain,
Spirits fordone of many a battle-plain,—
What thoughts are theirs, whene'er with feet unblest
Our modern Nobleman invades their rest ?
They'd long to purge the unclean touch away,
Given torches, sulphur, and a laurel spray !
To them poor We must go : and shall we boast
Our armies flung beyond the Irish coast,
Beyond our new-won Orkneys, and the skies
Where briefest night contents the Briton's eyes ?[3]
Vain boast ! when vice befouls Imperial Rome
Such as her subjects never learnt at home !

(ii. 149–63.)[4]

The 'subjects' Juvenal has in mind are 'young barbarians' from the outposts of empire. In Satire iii—perhaps his best—his thoughts are nearer home. He shows us the young Roman corrupted and preyed upon by all the pests of the Levant. His friend Umbricius, halted beneath 'the dripping Capene gate', is justifying a removal to the country :

THE people by the great most favour'd now,
Most shunn'd by me, I hasten to avow :
I cannot, Romans, rule my spleen, and see
A Grecian capital in Italy !—
Grecian ! O, no : with this vast sewer compared,

[1] Men paid a copper for admission to the public baths : boys below a certain age paid nothing.

[2] In the battle of Cremera 300 members of the Fabian 'family' were killed.

[3] There is some reason to believe that Juvenal himself served as a soldier in Great Britain—perhaps in the west of Scotland.

[4] Tr. partly adapted from the versions of Sir R. Stapylton (1660) and Gifford.

The dregs of Greece are scarcely worth regard :
Long since, the stream that wanton Syria laves
Has disembogued its filth in Tiber's waves,
Its language, arts ; o'erwhelm'd us with the scum
Of Antioch's streets, its minstrels, harp, and drum.
Hie to the Circus ! ye who pant to prove
A barbarous mistress, an outlandish love ;
Hie to the Circus ! there in crowds they stand,
Tires on their head, and timbrels in their hand.
Thy rustick, Mars, the trechedipna[1] wears,
And on his breast, rank with ceroma, bears
A paltry prize, well-pleased ; while every land,
Sicyon, and Amydos, and Alaband,
Tralles, and Samos, and a thousand more,
Thrive on his indolence, and daily pour
Their starving myriads forth : hither they come,
And batten on the genial soil of Rome ;
The minions, then the lords, of every princely dome !
A flattering, cringing, treacherous, artful race,
Of fluent tongue, and never-blushing face ;
A Protean tribe, one knows not what to call,
That shifts to every form, and shines in all :
Grammarian, painter, augur, rhetorician,
Geometer, quack, conjurer, and musician,
All arts his own the hungry Greekling counts,
And bid him mount the sky, the sky he mounts !

(iii. 58–78, tr. Gifford.)

[1] Juvenal purposely uses the Greek word, which means literally 'run-to-dinner-wear'—probably light slippers worn by Greek parasites. *Ceroma* was the Greek name for wrestlers' unguent. Wrestling, a Greek sport, was despised by Romans of the old school.

'At Rome', Umbricius adds, 'wealth is omnipotent. The word of a poor man is not believed; and the rich make sport of his appearance.' Here he continues:

THE feverish poor, by every sound distrest,
Curse the slow hours, and die for want of rest:
Sleep visits not their couch, it costs too dear;
And hence disease makes such wild havock here.
The carts' loud rumbling through the narrow way,
The drivers' clamours at each casual stay,
From drowsy Drusus[1] would his slumber take,
And keep the calves of Proteus broad awake!
If business call, obsequious crowds divide,
While o'er their heads the rich securely ride,
And read, or write, or sleep within,—for close
The litter, and the gloom invites repose.
Yet reach they first the goal; while, by the throng
Elbow'd and jostled, scarce we creep along,
Sharp strokes from poles, tubs, rafters, doom'd to feel,
Bespatter'd o'er with mud, from head to heel,
While the rude soldier gores us as he goes,
And marks, in blood, his progress on our toes!
See from the Dole[2] a vast tumultuous throng,
Each follow'd by his kitchen, pours along!
Huge pans, which Corbulo[3] could scarce uprear,
With steady neck a wretched slave must bear,
And, lest amid the way the flames expire,
Glide nimbly on and, gliding, fan the fire,
Through the close press with sinuous efforts wind,
And, piece by piece, leave his botch'd rags behind.

(iii. 232–254, tr. Gifford.)

[1] The somnolent emperor Claudius (r. A. D. 41–54) is meant. His original name was Tiberius Claudius Drusus. The sea-calves or seals of the god Proteus were also proverbial for their heavy sleep.

[2] 'Mess' would be more accurate than 'Dole'. The poorer people sometimes had meals in common. Food was brought in large chafing-dishes.

[3] An eminent general under Claudius and Nero, famed also for his stature and strength.

Johnson's *London* is modelled on this satire: and he and his times were in ready sympathy with the Fifth and Seventh, which deal with the abuse, or lack, of patronage in more than one aspect. Piety suggests a short quotation from the 'Plaint of the Impoverished Schoolmaster' contained in the Seventh. 'There is nothing', Juvenal says, 'on which the modern parent will spend less than on the education of his son'—and so looks back again to Old Rome:

GRANT Heav'n, that gentle weightlesse Earth may lie
On our fore-fathers' bones, and sprout on high
In flow'rs, which to the Aire perfumes may bring,
Cloathing their Urns in a perpetuall Spring,
Because a Tutor they did still repute
To be the sacred Parent's substitute.

(vii. 207–210, tr. Stapylton.)

His sympathy with the poor is based on experiences as a client; but at some time he came to possess not only a town house but two country estates. In the Eleventh Satire he invites a friend, Persicus, to his farm at Tibur, and tells him what hospitality he may expect:

I SHUN the stuck-up guest who points
Comparisons, and scoffs at humble joints.
I've not an ounce of ivory: dice or chess,
No piece is made of that stuff, I confess.
The very handles of my knives are bone;
Still for all that my fish I've never known
Go bad, or found the chicken cut less tender.
True, I've no carver to whom all must surrender,
Trained at the Guildhall School of Carving, where
Wild-boar and antelope and succulent hare,
Crimean pheasant, Brobdignagian duck,
And one-horned goat exported from Kalmuck,
A dummy knife [1] carves with such skilful swish
That Guildhall rings; a model every dish!
A slice of venison or guinea-fowl
My fellow cannot steal, for he's an owl,

[1] The art of carving was taught by means of wooden models.

No adept thief except of crumbs of cake.
Quite common glass bought cheap your thirst will slake
Fill'd by a country wench in homespun clad,
Not French or Chinese or some Negro-lad.
My servants all wear homespun, hair cropp'd straight
And comb'd the day alone when they've to wait.
That one's a shepherd's son, a cowherd's this;
His mother long not seen, he'll sigh, and miss
His cottage home, the kids that to him ran,
Gentle of face, in honour gentleman!

(xi. 129–154, tr., modernized, by H. L. Rogers.)

This piece is not the less charming for its long ancestry in *satura*.

The Sixth, longest and most elaborate of all, is in Juvenal's earlier manner. If we take his rhetoric seriously, we must suppose him to have been either an injured husband or, like Lucilius and Horace, a bachelor; for the whole satire (addressed nominally to a friend about to marry) is a denunciation of womankind unrelieved in its pessimism. The Roman marriage system invited disaster; and much harm had also been done by the tragic desire of Roman matrons to outrival the physical and mental attractions of a foreign *demi-monde*, and by their habit of flying for emotional relief to exotic cults. But fortunately we need never look to Juvenal for strict historical truth. He confuses past and present: he exposes only the worst side of the worst classes: and he exaggerates the evils he selects. Perhaps the most readable part is his sketch of the learned woman, despite its pleonasms and over-drawing:

BUT she is more intolerable yet,
Who plays the critick when at board she's set—
Calls Virgil charming, and attempts to prove
Poor Dido right, in venturing all for love.
From Maro and Maeonides[1] she quotes
The striking passages, and while she notes
Their beauties and defects, adjusts her scales,
And accurately weighs, which bard prevails.
The astonish'd guests sit mute: grammarians yield,
Loud rhetoricians, baffled, quit the field;

[1] i.e. from Virgil and Homer.

Even auctioneers and lawyers stand aghast,
And not a woman speaks !—So thick and fast
The wordy shower descends, that you would swear
A thousand bells were jangling in your ear,
A thousand basins clattering. Vex no more
Your trumpets and your timbrels, as of yore,
To ease the labouring moon[1] ; her single yell
Can drown their clangour, and dissolve the spell.
She lectures too in Ethicks, and declaims
On the CHIEF GOOD !—but, surely, she who aims
To seem too learn'd the sophist's garb should wear,
A hog, due offering, to Sylvanus[2] bear,
And, to the farthing bath, with men repair !
O, never may the partner of my bed
With subtleties of logick stuff her head ;
Nor whirl her rapid syllogisms around,
Nor with imperfect enthymemes confound !
Enough for me, if common things she know,
And have the little learning schools bestow.
I hate the female pedagogue, who pores
O'er her Palaemon[3] hourly ; who explores
All modes of speech, regardless of the sense,
But tremblingly alive to mood and tense :
Who puzzles me with many an uncouth phrase
From some old canticle of Numa's days ;
Corrects her country friends, and cannot hear
Her husband solecise without a sneer !

(vi. 434–456, tr. Gifford.)

Almost every type of woman described (and there are few omissions) can be paralleled from modern times. Sir T. Browne may have been infected with Juvenal's pessimism when he wrote

[1] It was believed that eclipses were caused by witchcraft, and that the sound of beaten copper, &c., broke the spell.

[2] Only men did sacrifice to this god. Juvenal means that she should do all men do, wear their dress, observe their ceremonies, and frequent the public baths. Cf. note 1, p. 311 above.

[3] The most distinguished grammarian of the Early Empire.

(in 1646): 'There is a certain list of vices declaimed against by all authors, which, digested into commonplaces, may serve any theme, and never be out of date till Doomsday.' It is refreshing to turn to a later piece, on 'Parental Responsibility', and find some gentler lines:

THERE'S due unto a Child a great respect:
If thou do'st any wickedness affect,
Slight not thy tender Infant coming in,
But let him stand betwixt thee and thy sin.
For, should thy Child doe anything that moves
The Censor's wrath, since he not only proves
In face and body like thee, but the Son
Ev'n of thy Manners: since all he hath done
Is walking in thy steps; can'st thou chastise
And persecute him for it with thy cryes,
Then disinherit him? What right hast Thou
To speak so fatherly and knit the brow,
That old, art worse?—thy giddy head design'd
For cupping-glasses to let out the wind!
(xiv. 47–58, tr. after Stapylton.)

The Tenth Satire, on 'The Vanity of Human Wishes', gave Johnson a second model. It is another rhetorical exercise in pessimism; and more powerful than the Sixth because of its more 'universal' character. This passage, confined to war-like ambitions, gives some idea of its philosophy and of its sound, and may remind us again of Sir T. Browne where he writes of 'the drums and tramplings of three conquests' and of 'Time which antiquates Antiquities and hath an art to make dust of all things':

THE spoils of WAR; the trunk in triumph placed,[1]
With all the trophies of the battle graced,
Crush'd helms, and batter'd shields; and streamers born
From vanquish'd fleets, and beams from chariots torn,

[1] One form of trophy was a tree-trunk with leaves stripped and branches lopped: on it the captured spoils were hung. The 'mournful captives' are figures sculptured on a triumphal arch.

And captives ranged around in mournful state,
Are prized as joys—beyond a mortal's fate :
Fired with the love of these, what countless swarms,
Barbarians, Romans, Greeks, have rush'd to arms,
All danger slighted, and all toil defied,
And madly conquer'd, or as madly died !
So much the raging thirst of fame exceeds
The generous warmth which prompts to worthy deeds,
That none confess fair Virtue's genuine power,
Or woo her to their breast, without a dower.
Yet has this wild desire, in other days,
This boundless avarice of a few for praise,
This frantick rage for names to grace a tomb,
Involved whole countries in one general doom :
Vain rage ! the roots of the wild fig-tree rise,
Strike through the marble, and—their memory dies !
For, like their mouldering tenants, tombs decay,
And, with the dust they hide, are swept away.

(x. 133–46, tr. Gifford.)

Most of the later satires are written round those philosophic commonplaces that were part of the food of Rhetoric ; yet we have no right to suppose that Juvenal adorned his moral texts without either conviction or sympathy. He reaches a high level in Satire xiii, where he argues that revenge is best left to a sinner's conscience ; and shortly after, that

'in the eye of heaven, a wicked deed
Devis'd, is done' (209–210, tr. Gifford.)

But perhaps the concluding lines of the Tenth are more striking. If all human wishes are vain, for what shall men pray ? He gives, like Persius, a Stoic answer :

SAY then, shall man, deprived all power of choice,
Ne'er raise to Heaven the supplicating voice ?
Not so ; but to the gods his fortunes trust :
Their thoughts are wise, their dispensations just.
What best may profit or delight they know,

And real good for fancied bliss bestow :
With eyes of pity they our frailties scan,
More dear to them, than to himself, is man.
By blind desire, by headlong passion driven,
For wife and heirs we daily weary Heaven ;
Yet still 'tis Heaven's prerogative to know
If heirs, or wife, will bring us weal or woe.
But, that thou mayst (for still 'tis good to prove
Our humble hope) ask something from above,
Thy pious offerings to the temple bear,
And, while the altars blaze, be this thy prayer :
O THOU, who know'st the wants of human kind,
Vouchsafe me health of body, health of mind ;
A soul prepared to meet the frowns of fate,
And look undaunted on a future state ;
That reckons death a blessing, yet can bear
Existence nobly, with its weight of care ;
That anger and desire alike restrains,
And counts Alcides' [1] toils, and cruel pains,
Superiour far to banquets, wanton nights,
And all Sardanapalus' soft delights !
Here bound, at length, thy wishes. I but teach
What blessings man by his own powers may reach.
THE PATH TO PEACE IS VIRTUE. We should see,
If wise, O Fortune, nought divine in thee :
But we have deified a name alone,
And fix'd in heaven thy visionary throne !

(x. 346–366, tr. Gifford.)

Perhaps all satirists are denied the full poetic gift, and avenge themselves on Nature by showing other imperfections in her handiwork. But Juvenal, at his best, sails nearer to poetry than most.

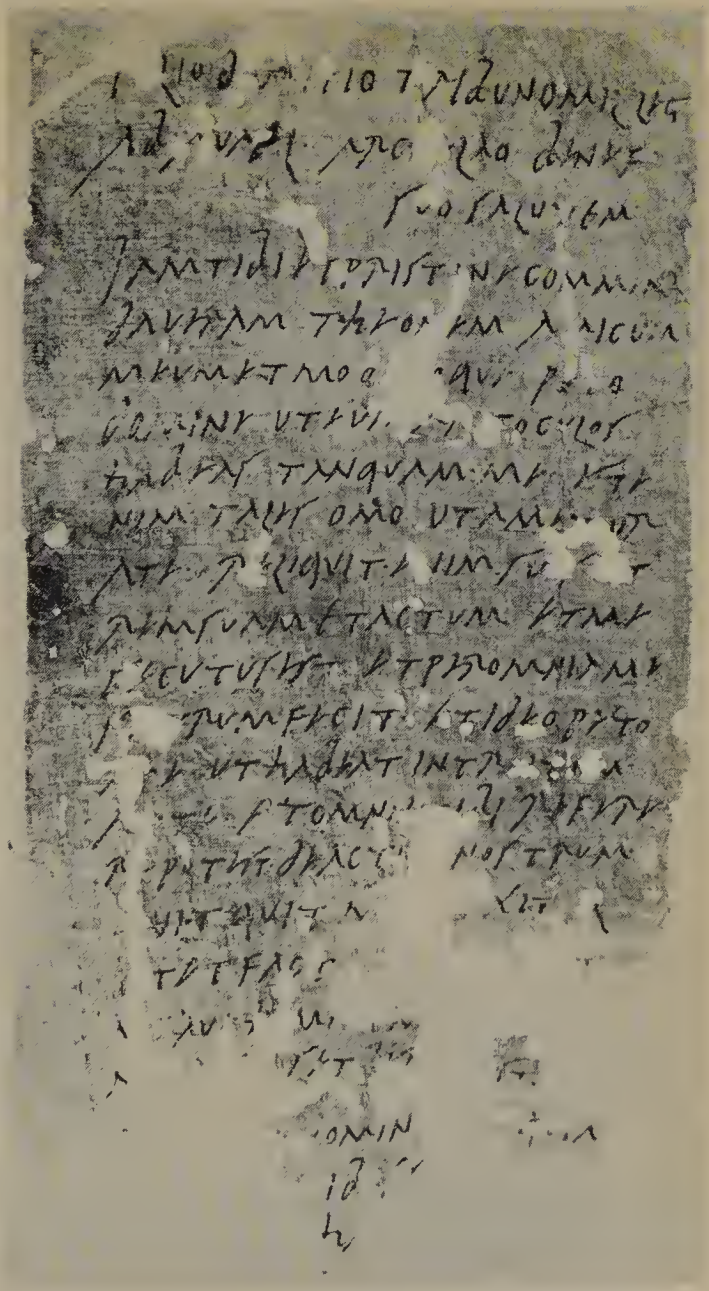
[1] Alcides is another name for Hercules.

LETTER-WRITING

It would be an arduous task to attempt to classify the many different types of letters which exist in almost every great literature which has progressed beyond the primitive stage; but one essential distinction can be made between those which are intended to be private and those which are deliberately written to be published. The former type needs no illustration; the latter approximates closely to the Essay—sometimes even to the Sermon—or again it may be used as a vehicle for airing the writer's views on political and other public topics of the day. The letters of Madame de Sévigné, of Lord Chesterfield to his son, of 'Junius', are all examples of this type, which has been widely extended in modern times by the well-known practice of 'Letters to the Editor' which we find in every newspaper. Roman literature is rich in letters of both types; the correspondence of Cicero and his friends comprises what is probably the most valuable collection of private letters that has ever been preserved, in addition to others which, though addressed to individuals, are really political manifestoes or personal explanations, often intended for wide circulation; while the epistles of the younger Seneca and the younger Pliny are interesting examples of the Essay-type, often artificial, often lacking in spontaneity, but peculiarly characteristic of the Roman mind and its weakness for moralizing in a pleasantly discursive vein. To these may be added the metrical 'Epistles' of Horace and Ovid, in which the letter-form is, as a rule, merely an artifice of style employed to cast general maxims and reflexions in a more definitely personal mould.

The correspondence of Marcus Tullius Cicero[1] is a unique literary monument, which gives the historian an unrivalled insight into the inmost thoughts and feelings of one of the master-minds of Rome at one of the most critical epochs of the world's history. 'There is no reticence, no economy of statement: every passing fancy, every ebullition of temper, every varying mood of exultation and depression, every momentary view of men and things, finds itself accurately mirrored in these letters. The times live again before us in the pages of Cicero, and, thanks to

[1] See pp. 93, 357 ff., 444 ff., 466 ff., 492 ff.



A Latin Papyrus letter of the second century A. D.

Oxyrhynchus Papyrus No. XXXII. Reproduced by the kind permission of the Egypt Exploration Society

him, he and his contemporaries are for us not mere lay-figures but actual flesh and blood.'[1]

The letters extend over the years 68–43 B. C., and are especially numerous in the later years of Cicero's life; out of a total of some 930 letters, of which some 90 are by Cicero's friends, more than 600 are dated from 49 to 43 B. C. None of the letters were actually published during the lifetime of Cicero, and the most interesting and important, the sixteen Books of letters to his most intimate personal friend, Atticus, were not published for at least a century after his death. Those who dislike Cicero can find ample material in his correspondence for substantiating the charges of vanity, cowardice, irresolution and pettiness which have so often been brought against him; but it must be remembered that, especially in his letters to Atticus, Cicero makes little attempt to conceal the weaknesses of his character, which are those of a very human and likeable personality. If as much were known to posterity about the real thoughts and feelings of Julius Caesar, the verdict of history upon that great but enigmatic figure might be considerably modified.

An outline of Cicero's public career will be found in the Chapter on Oratory[2]; it must be remembered that, in his speeches, Cicero is often 'window-dressing': in his private letters we generally find a truer picture of the political situation, and of Cicero's own feelings and ambitions. Thus, in this letter written to Atticus from Thessalonica (Salonika) in 58 B. C. we find him in the depths of dejection, which he does not attempt to dissemble:

SO long as your letters afforded me any ground for it, my hopes and my longings kept me at Thessalonica: but, as soon as I saw that all political business for this year had come to an end, I made up my mind not to go to Asia, because I cannot put up with society and I do not want to be far away in case the new magistrates should make a move. So I determined to go to your house in Epirus, not that the features of the place make any difference to me now that I shun the light of day entirely, but I should like to sail back to freedom from a port of yours, and, if that hope is cut off, I could not find a

[1] Strachan-Davidson, *Cicero*, p. 2. This masterly account of Cicero's career is marked by the most penetrating criticism and sympathetic appreciation of his character.

[2] pp. 444 ff.

better place either to drag on my miserable existence, or, what is preferable, to end it. I shall have few people about me, and shall get free from society.

Your letters never aroused my hopes as much as other people's : and yet my hopes were always fainter than your letters. However, since some kind of a move has been made in the matter, whatever kind it may be and whatsoever its cause, I will not disappoint either my dear and only brother's sad and touching entreaties, nor the promises of Sestius and others, nor the appeals of my wife in her deep affliction and my little Tullia in her misery, nor your own true-hearted letters. Epirus shall be my road back to freedom or to what I mentioned before.

I beg and beseech you, Pomponius, as you see how I have been robbed of my honours and of my dearest and fondest possessions by men's treachery, as you see how I was betrayed and cast aside by those on whose advice I relied, as you know how I was forced into betraying myself and my family, of your pity help me, and support my brother Quintus, who is not past salvation : guard Terentia and my children ; as for me, wait for me in Rome, if you think there is any chance of seeing me there. If not, come to see me, if you can, and allot me of your land enough for my body to rest in ; and send a man with letters as soon and as often as possible.

(*Ad Atticum*, iii. 19, tr. E. O. Winstedt.)

Here Cicero is writing in 54 B.C. to his brother Quintus, now serving as one of the principal staff-officers upon Julius Caesar's expedition to Britain.

Quintus, though lacking his brother's intellectual powers, was an efficient soldier, and Caesar appreciated his services.[1]

WHEN you receive a letter from me by the hand of an amanuensis, you may be sure that I have not even a little leisure ; when by my own—a little. For let me tell you that in regard to causes and trials in court I have

[1] Cf. p. 393 (Caesar's account of the investment of Quintus by the Nervii).

never been closer tied, and that, too, at the most unhealthy season of the year, and in the most oppressively hot weather. But these things, since you so direct me, I must put up with, and must not seem to have come short of the ideas and expectations which you and Caesar entertain of me, especially since, even if it were somewhat difficult not to do that, I am yet likely from this labour to reap great popularity and prestige. Accordingly, as you wish me to do, I take great pains not to hurt anyone's feelings, and to secure being liked even by those men who are most vexed at my close friendship with Caesar, while by those who are impartial, or even inclined to this side, I may be warmly courted and loved. When some very violent debates took place in the Senate on the subject of bribery for several days, because the candidates for the consulship had gone to such lengths as to be past all bearing, I was not in the house. I have made up my mind not to attempt any cure of the political situation without powerful protection. . . . I come now to a subject which, perhaps, ought to have been my first. How glad I was to get your letter from Britain! I was afraid of the ocean, afraid of the coast of the island. The other parts of the enterprise I do not underrate; but yet they inspire more hope than fear, and it is the suspense rather than any positive alarm that makes me uneasy. You, however, I can see, have a splendid subject for description, topography, natural features of things and places, manners, races, battles! your commander himself—what themes for your pen! I will gladly, as you request, assist you in the points you mention, and will send you the verses you ask for, that is, 'An owl to Athens.'[1] But, look you! I think you are keeping me in the dark. Tell me, my dear brother, what Caesar thinks of my verses. For he wrote before to tell me he had read my first book. Of the first part, he said that he had never read anything better even in Greek: the rest, up to a particular passage, somewhat 'careless'—that is his word. Tell me the truth—is it the subject-matter or the 'style' that he does not like? You needn't be afraid: I shall

[1] 'Sending coals to Newcastle.'

not admire myself one whit the less. On this subject speak like a lover of truth, and with your usual brotherly frankness.

(*Ad Q. F.*, ii. 15, tr. E. S. Shuckburgh.)

In 51 B. C. Cicero, much against his will, was sent out to govern the province of Cilicia, in S.E. Asia Minor, and remained there for a year. His predecessor, Appius Claudius, had grossly misgoverned the province: Cicero's administration was a model of justice and self-restraint. Among his correspondents was Marcus Caelius Rufus, a brilliant and dissipated young man of fashion, now serving the office of Aedile at Rome. In this letter—witty, slangy, and shrewd—Caelius sums up the political situation in February 50 B. C.: Caesar's ten years' governorship in Gaul is drawing to its close, and the signs of the times are already pointing to the final breach between Caesar and Pompey which resulted in the Civil War in 49.

I HAVE no doubt the news has reached you of Appius being impeached by Dolabella. But there is by no means the feeling against him which I had expected. For the truth is, Appius acted with a good deal of sense. No sooner did Dolabella appear at the tribunal, than he entered the city and gave up his demand for a triumph. By thus acting he at once took the edge off popular talk, and showed himself also to be better prepared than his accuser had expected. His chief hope is now in you. I know you don't dislike him. It is now in your power to attach him to you as strongly as you choose. If you had never had a quarrel with him, you would now have had a freer hand in the whole business: as it is, if you push legality to the proverbial extreme, you must be on your guard against being thought not to have been quite candid and sincere in renouncing your hostility. In this respect you will certainly be on safe ground in doing him a favour, if so minded; for no one will say that you have been debarred from doing a duty by the influence of intimacy and friendship. . . . Pompey is said to be very anxious on Appius's behalf, so much so that it is even thought that he means to send one or other of his sons to you. Here we are all for his acquittal, and, by Hercules, every disclosure that could reflect disgrace or

dishonour on him has been carefully barred. Our consuls are indeed energetic: they haven't been able to get a single decree through the Senate, except the one for the Latin festival! Our friend Curio's tribunate is deadly dull—as cold as ice. In short, I can hardly express to you the flatness of everything at Rome. If it had not been for a good fight I am having with the shopkeepers and water-companies, a lethargy would have settled upon the State. If the Parthians don't make it warm for you, we here are stiff with cold. However, Bibulus[1] has done his best: without the help of the Parthians he has managed to lose a poor cohort or two in Amanus. So it is reported here.

I said just now that Curio was much in the cold: well, he is now getting warm! for he is being pulled to pieces with a hot fire of criticism. For just because he did not get his way about intercalation he has with the most outrageous levity ratted to the popular party, and begun speaking up for Caesar, and has made a great parade of a road law, not much unlike Rullus's agrarian law, and another about the sale of provisions, which enacts that the aediles should measure goods. He had not done this when I wrote the first part of my letter. Pray, if you render any assistance to Appius, let me have some of the credit. . . . It will be a disgrace to you if I have no Greek panthers.[2]

(*Ad Fam.* viii. 6, tr. Shuckburgh.)

This letter, written just after the outbreak of the Civil War, in January 49 B.C., shows Cicero as husband and father:

TULLIUS to his wife, and her father to his dearest daughter, and Cicero[3] to his mother and sister, send warm greetings. I think, my darlings, you should carefully consider and reconsider what to do, whether to stay at Rome, or to join me, or seek some place of safety. This is not a point for my consideration alone, but for yours also. What occurs to me is this: you may be

[1] Bibulus was now governor of Syria, the next province to Cilicia.
[2] Caelius wanted Cicero to send him panthers from his province, Cilicia, for the public games which he, as Aedile, had to provide.
[3] Young Marcus, Cicero's son.

safe at Rome under Dolabella's[1] protection, and that circumstance may prove serviceable to us in case of any violence or plunder commencing. But, on the other hand, I am shaken in this idea by seeing that all the loyalists have left Rome and have the ladies of their families with them. Again, the district in which I am now consists of towns and estates also which are in my power, so you could be a good deal with me, and, if you quitted me, could very conveniently stay in domains belonging to us. I cannot as yet quite make up my mind which of the two is the better course for you to take. Please observe for yourselves what other ladies of your rank are doing, and be careful not to be cut off from the power of leaving town when you *do* wish to do so. I would have you carefully consider it again and again with each other and with your friends. Tell Philotimus to secure the house with barricades and a watch. Also please organize a regular service of letter-carriers, so that I may hear something from you every day. Above all attend to your health, if you wish me to maintain mine. (*Ad Fam.* xiv. 18, tr. Shuckburgh.)

The following short letter, written by Caesar to Cicero in March 49, gives us an interesting side-light upon the personality of Caesar.

THOUGH I have only had a glimpse of our friend Furnius, and have not yet been able conveniently to speak to him or hear what he has to say, being in a hurry and on the march, yet I could not neglect the opportunity of writing to you and sending him to convey my thanks. Be sure I have often thanked you and I expect to have occasion to do so still more often in the future : so great are your services to me. First I beg you, since I trust that I shall quickly reach Rome, to let me see you there, and employ your advice, favour, position and help of all kinds. I will return to what I began with : pardon my haste and the shortness of my letter. All the other information you may get from Furnius. (*Ad Att.* ix. 6*a*, tr. Winstedt.)

[1] Dolabella, a supporter of Caesar, was now the husband of Cicero's daughter, Tullia.

In December of 45 B.C. Caesar paid a visit to Cicero at his villa at Puteoli (near Naples). This famous letter to Atticus gives a spirited account of a rather alarming ordeal.

TO think that my formidable guest leaves no regret behind! For indeed it passed off splendidly. However, when he reached Philippus on the evening of the 18th, the house was so full of soldiers that there was hardly a room left for Caesar himself to dine in. Two thousand men if you please! I was much disturbed as to what was going to happen the next day; and Cassius Barba came to the rescue and gave me guards. A camp was pitched in the fields, and the house put under guard. On the 19th he stayed with Philippus till one o'clock and admitted no one: at his accounts, I believe, with Balbus. Then he walked on the shore. After two he took his bath. Then he heard about Mamurra without changing countenance. He was anointed and sat down to dinner. He was undergoing a course of emetics, so he ate and drank at his pleasure without fear. It was a lordly dinner, and well-served, and not only that, but

> 'Well cooked, and seasoned, and, the truth to tell,
> With pleasant discourse all went very well.'[1]

Besides his chosen circle were entertained very liberally in three rooms: and freedmen of lower degree and slaves could not complain of stint. The upper sort were entertained in style. In fact I was somebody. Still he was not the sort of guest to whom one would say: 'Be sure to look me up on the way back.' Once is enough. There was no serious talk, but plenty of literary. In a word he was pleased and enjoyed himself. He said he would spend one day at Puteoli and another near Baiae.

There you have all about my entertainment, or billeting you might say, objectionable, as I have said, but not uncomfortable. I am staying here a while and then go to Tusculum. As he passed Dolabella's house, and nowhere else, the whole troop formed up on the right and left of him. So Nicias tells me.

(*Ad Att.* xiii. 52, tr. Winstedt.)

[1] A quotation from Lucilius.

Although in the majority of the letters politics form the main topic, Cicero continually reveals his interest in philosophy, literature, and the general life of his day. The next letter, to Papirius Paetus, is marked by the half-melancholy facetiousness assumed by Cicero during the distasteful years of Caesar's dictatorship:

I WAS doubly charmed by your letter, first because it made me laugh myself, and secondly because I saw that you could still laugh. Nor did I in the least object to being overwhelmed with your shafts of ridicule, as though I were a light skirmisher in the war of wits. What I *am* vexed at is that I have not been able, as I had intended, to run over to see you: for you would have had not a mere guest but a brother-in-arms. And such a hero! not the man whom you used to do for by the *hors-d'œuvre*. I now bring an unimpaired appetite to the egg, and so the fight is maintained right up to the roast veal. The compliments you used to pay me in old times—'What a contented person!' 'What an easy guest to entertain!'—are things of the past. All my anxiety about the good of the State, all meditating of speeches to be delivered in the Senate, all getting up of briefs I have cast to the winds. I have thrown myself into the camp of my old enemy Epicurus—not, however, with a view to the extravagance of the present day, but to that refined splendour of yours—I mean your old style when you had money to spend (though you never had more landed estate). Therefore prepare! You have to deal with a man who not only has a large appetite, but who also knows a thing or two. You are aware of the extravagance of your *bourgeois gentilhomme*. You must forget all your little baskets and your omelettes. I am now so advanced in the art that I frequently venture to ask your friend Verrius and Camillus to dinner—what dandies! how fastidious! But think of my audacity: I even gave Hirtius a dinner, without a peacock however. In that dinner my cook could imitate him in everything but the hot sauce.

So this is my way of life nowadays; in the morning I receive not only a large number of 'loyalists', who, however, look

gloomy enough, but also our exultant conquerors here, who in my case are quite prodigal in polite and affectionate attentions. When the stream of morning callers has ebbed, I wrap myself up in my books, either writing or reading. There are also some visitors who listen to my discourses under the belief of my being a man of learning, because I am a trifle more learned than themselves. After that all my time is given to my bodily comfort. I have mourned for my country more deeply and longer than any mother for her only son. But take care, if you love me, to keep your health, lest I should take advantage of your being laid up to eat you out of house and home. For I am resolved not to spare you even when you are ill.

(*Ad Fam.* ix. 20. tr. Shuckburgh.)

Although Cicero professed to be delighted at the assassination of Caesar, there were others who held that his removal had only made 'confusion worse confounded'. Among these was Gaius Matius, who sent this frank and manly 'apologia' to Cicero in August 44:

I RECEIVED great pleasure from your letter, because I found that your opinion of me was what I had hoped and wished it to be; not that I was in any doubt about it, but for the very reason that I valued it so highly I was most anxious that it should remain unimpaired. Conscious however that I had done nothing which could give offence to the feelings of any good citizen, I was naturally the less inclined to believe that you, adorned as you are with so many excellences of the most admirable kind, could have allowed yourself to be convinced of anything on mere idle report; particularly seeing that you were a friend for whom my spontaneous attachment had been and still was unbroken. And knowing now that it has been as I hoped, I will answer those attacks which you have often opposed on my behalf, as was fairly to be expected from your well-known generosity and the friendship existing between us.

For I am well aware of all they have been heaping on me since Caesar's death. They make it a reproach against me that I go

heavily for the loss of a friend, and think it cruel that one whom I loved should have fallen, because, say they, country must be put before friends—as though they have hitherto been successful in proving that his death really was the gain of the commonwealth. But I will not enter any subtle plea; I admit that I have not attained to your higher grades of philosophy: for I have neither been a partisan of Caesar in our civil dissensions—though I did not abandon my friend even when his action was a stumbling-block to me—nor did I ever give my approval to the Civil War, or even to the actual ground of quarrel, of which indeed I earnestly desired that the first sparks should be trampled out. And so in the triumph of a personal friend I was never ensnared by the charms either of place or of money; prizes which have been recklessly abused by the rest, though they had less influence with him than I had. I may even say that my own property was impaired by that act of Caesar, thanks to which many of those who are rejoicing at Caesar's death continued to live in their own country. That our defeated fellow-countrymen should be spared was as much an object to me as my own safety. Is it possible then for me, who wanted all to be left uninjured, not to feel indignation that he by whom this was secured is dead? above all when the very same men were the cause at once of his unpopularity and his untimely end? You shall smart then, say they, since you dare to disapprove of our deed. What unheard-of insolence! One man then may boast of a deed which another is not even allowed to lament without punishment. Why, even slaves have always been free of this—to feel their fears, their joys, their sorrows as their own, and not at anybody else's dictation; and these are the very things which now, at least according to what your 'liberators' have always in their mouths, they are trying to wrest from us by terrorism. But they try in vain. There is no danger which has terrors enough ever to make me desert the side of gratitude or humanity; for never have I thought that death in a good cause is to be shunned, often indeed that it deserves to be courted. But why are they inclined to be

enraged with me if my wishes are simply that they may come to regret their deed, desiring as I do that Caesar's death may be felt to be untimely by us all? It is my duty as a citizen to desire the preservation of the constitution? Well, unless both my life in the past and all my hopes for the future prove without any words of mine that I do earnestly desire this, I make no demand to prove it by my professions.

To you therefore I make a specially earnest appeal to let facts come before assertions, and to take my word for it that, if you feel that honesty is the best policy, it is impossible I should have any association with lawless villains. Or can you believe that the principles I pursued in the days of my youth, when even error could pass with some excuse, I shall renounce now that I am going down the hill, and with my own hands unravel all the web of my life? That I will not do; nor yet will I commit any act that could give offence, beyond the fact that I do lament the sad fall of one who was to me the dearest friend and the most illustrious of men. But were I otherwise disposed, I would never deny what I was doing, lest it should be thought I was at once shameless in doing wrong, and false and cowardly in dissembling it.

But then I undertook the management of those games which Caesar's heir celebrated for Caesar's victory? Well, this is a matter which belongs to one's private obligations, not to any political arrangement; it was however in the first place a tribute of respect which I was called upon to pay to the memory and the eminent position of a man whom I dearly loved, even though he was dead, and also one that I could not refuse at the request of a young man so thoroughly promising, and so worthy in every way of Caesar as he is.

Again, I have frequently paid visits of compliment to the consul Antonius. And you will find that the very men who think me but a lukewarm patriot are constantly going to his house in crowds, actually for the purpose of soliciting or carrying away some favour. But what a monstrous claim it is, that while Caesar never laid any such embargo as this to prevent me from associating

freely with anybody I pleased—even if they were people whom he personally did not like—these men who have robbed me of my friend should attempt by malicious insinuations to prevent my showing a kindness to whomsoever I will !

I have however no fear that the moderation of my life will hereafter prove an insufficient defence against false insinuations, and that even those who do not love me, because of my loyalty to Caesar, would not rather have their own friends imitate me than themselves. Such of life as remains to me, at least if I succeed in what I desire, I shall spend in quiet at Rhodes ; but if I find that some chance has put a stop to this I shall simply live at Rome as one who is always desirous that right should be done.

I am deeply grateful to our good friend Trebatius for having thus disclosed to me your sincere and friendly feeling, and given me even an additional reason for honouring and paying respect to one whom it has always been a pleasure to me to regard as a friend. Farewell heartily, and let me have your esteem.

(*Ad Fam.* xi. 28, tr. G. E. Jeans.)

A letter from young Marcus, Cicero's son, to his father's confidential secretary, Tiro, may form a fitting conclusion to these extracts. In 44 B.C. young Cicero was a student at Athens, one of the chief ' University ' towns of the time, and it is clear enough that his manner of life there was not as exemplary as a fond parent might have wished. The letter is a curious mixture of *naïveté* and guile, and no doubt it has had a thousand counterparts in every age—not excluding the present. Though but a shadow of his father, young Cicero was not utterly worthless, and the Emperor Augustus paid him the honour due to his name, by taking him as his colleague in the consulship of 30 B.C.

AFTER I had been anxiously expecting letter-carriers day after day, at length they arrived forty-six days after they left you. Their arrival was most welcome to me : for while I took the greatest possible pleasure in the letter of the kindest and most beloved of fathers, still your most delightful letter put a finishing stroke to my joy. So I no longer repent of having suspended writing for a time, but am rather rejoiced at it ;

for I have reaped a great reward in your kindness for my pen having been silent. I am therefore exceedingly glad that you have unhesitatingly accepted my excuse. I am sure, dearest Tiro, that the reports about me which reach you answer your best wishes and hopes. I will make them good, and will do my best that this belief in me, which day by day becomes more and more *en évidence,* shall be doubled. Wherefore you may with confidence and assurance fulfil your promise of being the trumpeter of my reputation. For the errors of my youth have caused me so much remorse and suffering that not only does my heart shrink from what I did, my very ears abhor the mention of it. And of this anguish and sorrow I know and am assured that you have taken your share. And I don't wonder at it ! for while you wished me all success for my sake, you did so also for your own ; for I have ever meant you to be my partner in all my good fortunes. Since, therefore, you have suffered sorrow through me, I will now take care that through me your joy shall be doubled. Let me assure you that my very close connection to Cratippus is that of a son rather than a pupil : for though I enjoy his lectures, I am also specially charmed with his delightful manners. I spend whole days with him, and often part of the night : for I induce him to dine with me as often as possible. This intimacy having been established, he often drops in upon us unexpectedly while we are at dinner, and laying aside the stiff airs of a philosopher joins in our jests with the greatest possible freedom. He is such a man—so delightful, so distinguished—that you should take pains to make his acquaintance at the earliest possible opportunity. I need hardly mention Bruttius, whom I never allow to leave my side. He is a man of a strict and moral life, as well as being the most delightful company. For in him fun is not divorced from literature and the daily philosophical inquiries which we make in common. I have hired a residence next door to him, and as far as I can with my poor pittance I subsidize his narrow means. Furthermore, I have begun practising declamation in Greek with Cassius ; in Latin I like having my practice with Bruttius. My

intimate friends and daily company are those whom Cratippus brought with him from Mitylene—good scholars, of whom he has the highest opinion. I also see a good deal of Epicrates, the leading man at Athens, and Leonides, and other men of that sort. So now you know how I am going on.

You remark in your letter on the character of Gorgias. The fact is, I found him very useful in my daily practice of declamation; but I subordinated everything to obeying my father's injunctions, for he had written ordering me to give him up at once. I wouldn't shilly-shally about the business, for fear my making a fuss should cause my father to harbour some suspicion. Moreover, it occurred to me that it would be offensive for me to express an opinion on a decision of my father's. However, your interest and advice are welcome and acceptable. Your apology for lack of time I quite accept; for I know how busy you always are. I am very glad that you have bought an estate, and you have my best wishes for the success of your purchase. Don't be surprised at my congratulations coming in at this point in my letter, for it was at the corresponding point in yours that you told me of your purchase. You are a man of property! You must drop your city manners: you have become a Roman country-gentleman. How clearly I have your dearest face before my eyes at this moment! For I seem to see you buying things for the farm, talking to your bailiff, saving the seeds at dessert in the corner of your cloak. But as to the matter of money, I am as sorry as you that I was not on the spot to help you. But do not doubt, my dear Tiro, of my assisting you in future, if fortune does but stand by me; especially as I know that this estate has been purchased for our joint advantage. As to my commissions about which you are taking trouble—many thanks! But I beg you to send me a secretary at the earliest opportunity—if possible a Greek; for he will save me a great deal of trouble in copying out notes. Above all, take care of your health, that we may have some literary talk together hereafter. I commend Anteros to you.

(*Ad Fam.* xvi. 21, tr. Shuckburgh.)

Of the Epistles of QUINTUS HORATIUS FLACCUS,[1] two specimens must suffice:[2] they partake far more of the nature of 'Satire', as understood by Horace, than of genuine letters, for though a personal note is often present, the epistolary form is really a convention, not unlike the dialogues in which the Satires are often cast. The Epistles are the work of Horace's middle age; they are more mature than the Satires, and display a fuller experience of life and a greater ease of style. The subjects vary from Literary Criticism, characteristic especially of the Second Book and the 'Art of Poetry', to praise of country life and moderate tastes, and discussions of the paradoxes of philosophy, handled with a light touch, and pleasantly flavoured with humour and shrewd common sense.

The following epistle, addressed to the poet Tibullus, is typical of the more personal type. Its date is probably between 23 and 20 B. C.

ALBIUS, kind critic of my satires, say,
What do you down at Pedum far away?
Are you composing what will dim the shine
Of Cassius' works, so delicately fine,
Or sauntering, calm and beautiful, through the wood,
Bent on such thoughts as suit the wise and good?
No brainless trunk is yours: a form to please,
Wealth, wit to use it, Heaven vouchsafes you these.
What could fond nurse wish more for her sweet pet
Than friends, good looks, and health without a let,
A shrewd clear head, and tongue to speak his mind,
A seemly household, and a purse well-lined?
Let hopes and sorrows, fears and angers be,
And think each day that dawns the last you'll see;
For so the hour that greets you unforeseen
Will bring with it enjoyment twice as keen.
Ask you of me? you'll laugh to find me grown
A hog of Epicurus, full twelve stone.

(*Epistles* i. 4, tr. Conington.)

[1] See pp. 69 ff., 166, 288 ff., 364 ff.

[2] The 'Heroides' and 'Epistles' of Ovid are not described here, as they are more appropriately classed under Elegiac Verse (see pp. 153 ff.).

Autobiographical details are often interspersed among general reflexions, as in this passage from the Second Book:

At Rome I had my schooling, and was taught
Achilles' wrath, and all the woes it brought;
At classic Athens, where I went ere long,
I learnt to draw the linè 'twixt right and wrong,
And search for truth, if so she might be seen,
In academic groves of blissful green;
But soon the stress of civil strife removed
My adolescence from the scenes it loved,
And ranged me with a force that could not stand
Before the might of Caesar's conquering hand.
Then when Philippi turned me all adrift
A poor plucked fledgeling, for myself to shift,
Bereft of property, impaired in purse,
Sheer penury drove me into scribbling verse:
But now, when times are altered, having got
Enough, thank heaven, at least to boil my pot,
I were the veriest madman if I chose
To write a poem rather than to doze.

(*Epistles* ii. 2, 41–54, tr. Conington.)

Lucius Annaeus Seneca,[1] one of the most prolific of Roman writers, is the most characteristic figure of the age of Claudius and Nero, and will always be associated with the latter, as the tutor and adviser of his earlier years. Born in Spain, he shows little sign of a provincial origin in his writings, which range from tragedies to natural history, and his pointed, epigrammatical style, with its wealth of rhetorical figures and the subtle tricks of expression, is perhaps the best example of what is termed 'Silver Latin'—the Latin of Imperial times. The Moral Epistles were composed in the later years of Seneca's life, when he had retired from his public career, conscious that he was no longer capable of restraining the fantastic propensities of the young emperor. Though all addressed to Lucilius, these letters are frankly general in their appeal, and are more like sermons than anything else in classical Roman literature. Written from the point of view of the

[1] See pp. 181 ff., 299 ff., 476 ff., 487.

Stoic philosophy, they inculcate moral lessons on such subjects as the Terrors of Death, Philosophy and Riches, Progress, Virtue, the Supreme Good, the evils of Drunkenness, the Happy Life; and their value was recognized from early times by the Christian writers, who found in them much that was entirely in sympathy with their own moral beliefs. In the Middle Ages, Seneca's reputation stood as high as Cicero's, and Dante, Chaucer, Petrarch, all owed him a debt.

The following letter, describing an experience in travelling through the tunnel which formed a short cut between Naples and the fashionable seaside resort of Baiae, is most characteristic of Seneca's method:

WHEN it was time for me to return to Naples from Baiae, I easily persuaded myself that a storm was raging, that I might avoid another trip by sea; and yet the road was so deep in mud, all the way, that I may be thought none the less to have made a voyage. On that day I had to endure the full fate of an athlete; the anointing with which we began was followed by the sand-sprinkle in the Naples tunnel. No place could be longer than that prison; nothing could be dimmer than those torches, which enabled us, not to see amid the darkness, but to see the darkness. But, even supposing that there was light in the place, the dust, which is an oppressive and disagreeable thing even in the open air, would destroy the light; how much worse the dust is there, where it rolls back upon itself, and, being shut in without ventilation, blows back in the faces of those who set it going! So we endured two inconveniences at the same time, and they were diametrically different: we struggled both with mud and with dust on the same road and on the same day.

The gloom, however, furnished me with some food for thought; I felt a certain mental thrill, and a transformation unaccompanied by fear, due to the novelty and the unpleasantness of an unusual occurrence. Of course I am not speaking to you of myself at this point, because I am far from being a perfect person, or even a man of middling qualities; I refer to one over whom fortune has lost

her control. Even such a man's mind will be smitten with a thrill and he will change colour. For there are certain emotions, my dear Lucilius, which no courage can avoid; nature reminds courage how perishable a thing it is. And so he will contract his brow when the prospect is forbidding, will shudder at sudden apparitions, and will become dizzy when he stands at the edge of a high precipice and looks down. This is not fear; it is a natural feeling which reason cannot rout. That is why certain brave men, most willing to shed their own blood, cannot bear to see the blood of others. Some persons collapse and faint at the sight of a freshly inflicted wound; others are affected similarly on handling or viewing an old wound which is festering. And others meet the sword-stroke more readily than they see it dealt.

Accordingly, as I said, I experienced a certain transformation, though it could not be called confusion. Then at the first glimpse of restored daylight my good spirits returned without forethought or command. And I began to muse and think how foolish we are to fear certain objects to a greater or less degree, since all of them end in the same way. For what difference does it make whether a watch-tower or a mountain crashes down upon us? No difference at all, you will find. Nevertheless, there will be some men who fear the latter mishap to a greater degree, though both accidents are equally deadly; so true it is that fear looks not to the effect, but to the cause of the effect. Do you suppose that I am now referring to the Stoics, who hold that the soul of a man crushed by a great weight cannot abide, and is scattered forthwith, because it has not had a free opportunity to depart? That is not what I am doing; those who think thus are, in my opinion, wrong. Just as fire cannot be crushed out, since it will escape round the edges of the body which overwhelms it; just as the air cannot be damaged by lashes and blows, or even cut into, but flows back about the object to which it gives place; similarly the soul, which consists of the subtlest particles, cannot be arrested or destroyed inside the body, but, by virtue of its delicate substance, it will rather escape through the very object by which it

is being crushed. Just as lightning, no matter how widely it strikes and flashes, makes its return through a narrow opening, so the soul, which is still subtler than fire, has a way of escape through any part of the body. We therefore come to this question whether the soul can be immortal. But be sure of this: if the soul survives the body after the body is crushed, the soul can in no wise be crushed out, precisely because it does not perish; for the rule of immortality never admits of exceptions, and nothing can harm that which is everlasting. Farewell.

(*Epistle* lvii, tr. R. M. Gummere.)

Another extract may be taken from a letter written in praise of the simple life:

MY friend Maximus and I have been spending a most happy period of two days, taking with us very few slaves—one carriage-load—and no paraphernalia except what we wore on our persons. The mattress lies on the ground, and I upon the mattress. There are two rugs—one to spread beneath us and one to cover us. Nothing could have been subtracted from our luncheon; it took not more than an hour to prepare, and we were nowhere without dried figs, never without writing-tablets. If I have bread, I use figs as a relish; if not, I regard figs as a substitute for bread. Hence they bring me a New Year feast every day, and I make the New Year happy and prosperous by good thoughts and greatness of soul; for the soul is never greater than when it has laid aside all extraneous things, and has secured peace for itself by fearing nothing, and riches by craving no riches. The vehicle in which I have taken my seat is a farmer's cart. Only by walking do the mules show that they are alive. The driver is barefoot, and not because it is summer either. I can scarcely force myself to wish that others shall think this cart mine. My false embarrassment about the truth still holds out, you see; and whenever we meet a more sumptuous party I blush in spite of myself—proof that this conduct which I approve and applaud has not yet gained a firm and steadfast dwelling-place within me. He

who blushes at riding in a rattle-trap will boast when he rides in style.

So my progress is still insufficient. I have not yet the courage openly to acknowledge my thriftiness. Even yet I am bothered by what other travellers think of me. But instead of this I should really have uttered an opinion counter to that in which mankind believe, saying, ' You are mad, you are misled, your admiration devotes itself to superfluous things ! You estimate no man at his real worth. When property is concerned, you reckon up in this way with most scrupulous calculation those to whom you shall lend either money or benefits ; for by now you enter benefits also as payments in your ledger. You say : " His estates are wide, but his debts are large." " He has a fine house, but he has built it on borrowed capital." " No man will display a more brilliant retinue on short notice, but he cannot meet his debts." " If he pays off his creditors, he will have nothing left." ' So you will feel bound to do in all other cases as well,—to find out by elimination the amount of every man's actual possessions.

I suppose you call a man rich just because his gold plate goes with him even on his travels, because he farms land in all the provinces, because he unrolls a large account-book, because he owns estates near the city so great that men would grudge his holding them in the waste lands of Apulia. But after you have mentioned all these facts, he is poor. And why ? He is in debt. ' To what extent ? ' you ask. For all that he has. Or perchance you think it matters whether one has borrowed from another man or from Fortune. What good is there in mules caparisoned in uniform livery ? Or in decorated chariots and

> Steeds decked with purple and with tapestry,
> With golden harness hanging from their necks,
> Champing their yellow bits, all clothed in gold ?

Neither master nor mule is improved by such trappings.

(*Epistle* lxxxvii, §§ 2–8, tr. Gummere.)

There is in the style of Seneca's epistles an element of artificiality, of constant striving for effect, that soon palls upon us; we feel ourselves in a hot-house atmosphere, where a breath of fresh air would be more than ordinarily welcome; Cicero even in his most weak-minded moments is more human than the stately moralizer who, in spite of his life-worship at the shrine of poverty and simplicity, amassed one of the largest fortunes of the first century A. D., by methods alleged to have been none too scrupulous.

A more genuine, less laboured effect is produced by the letters of C. PLINIUS, the younger,[1] who was born a few years before the death of Seneca, on the shores of Lake Como; though Pliny, like Seneca, wrote his letters with an eye to publication (except the last book, which contains his official correspondence with the Emperor Trajan) and therefore lacked the spontaneity of Cicero. His letters are graceful essays or descriptive pieces, which give us many interesting details about the life and manners of his age, and show him to have been a man of estimable character, kind, honourable, and sincere, if somewhat lacking in a sense of humour.

Pliny, who was the nephew of the celebrated author of the Natural History, played a distinguished part in public life under Domitian, Nerva, and Trajan; he was an eminent lawyer and a leader of the Roman bar, and rose to the consulship in A. D. 100. Some ten years later he was sent as the legate of Trajan to govern the province of Bithynia, in N.W. Asia Minor, and the volume of correspondence, in which he asks the Emperor's advice or orders on questions of principle or details of administration, gives us most valuable information upon the methods of provincial government under one of the best of the Roman emperors. Pliny remained in Bithynia until his death, which occurred before A. D. 115.

The following letter, to the great historian Tacitus, Pliny's friend and contemporary, illustrates Pliny's generous interest in providing for the education of the children of his native town of Como, where his memory is still treasured:

I REJOICE that you are safely arrived in Rome; for though I am always desirous to see you, I am more particularly so now. I purpose to continue a few days longer at my Tusculum estate in order to finish a little work which I have upon my hands. For I am afraid, should I put a stop to this design, now that it is so nearly completed, I should find it difficult to resume it. Mean-

[1] See pp. 387 ff.

while, that I may strike while the iron is hot, I send this letter, like an *avant-courrier*, to request a favour of you, which I mean shortly to ask in person. But before I inform you what my request is I must let you into the occasion of it.

Being lately at my native place, a young lad, son to one of my fellow-townsmen, made me a visit. 'Do you go to school?' I asked him. 'Yes,' said he. 'And where?' He told me, 'At Milan.' 'And why not here?' 'Because' (said his father, who was present, and had in fact brought the boy with him) 'we have no teachers.' 'How is that?' said I; 'surely it nearly concerns you who are fathers' (and very opportunely several of the company were so) 'that your sons should receive their education here, rather than anywhere else. For where can they be placed more agreeably than in their own country, or maintained in more modest habits and at less expense, than at home and under the eye of their parents? Upon what very easy terms might you, by a general contribution, procure teachers, if you would only apply towards raising a salary for them what you now spend on your son's lodging, journeys, and whatever a man has to pay for when abroad (which means, paying for everything). Why, I, who have as yet no children myself, am ready to give a third part of any sum you shall think proper to raise for this purpose, for the benefit of our Commonwealth, whom I regard as a daughter or a parent. I would take upon myself the whole expense, were I not apprehensive that my benefaction might hereafter be abused and perverted to private ends; as I have observed to be the case in several places where teachers are engaged by the local authorities. The single means to prevent this mischief is, to leave the choice of the professors entirely in the breast of the parents, who will be so much the more careful to determine properly as they shall be obliged to share the expense of maintaining them. For though they may be careless in disposing of another's bounty, they will certainly be cautious how they apply their own; and will see that none but those who deserve it shall receive my money, when they must at the same time receive theirs too. Let

my example then encourage you to unite heartily in this design ; and be assured, the greater the sum my share shall amount to, the more agreeable it will be to me. You can undertake nothing more advantageous to your children, nor more acceptable to your country. They will by this means receive their education where they receive their birth, and be accustomed from their infancy to inhabit and affect their native soil. May you be able to procure professors of such distinguished abilities, that the neighbouring towns shall be glad to draw their learning from hence ; and as you now send your children to foreigners for education, may foreigners hereafter flock hither for their instruction.'

I thought proper thus to lay open to you the rise of this affair, that you might be the more sensible how agreeable it will be to me if you undertake the office I request. I entreat you, therefore, with all the earnestness a matter of so much importance deserves, to look out, amongst the great numbers of men of letters which the reputation of your genius brings to you, teachers to whom we may apply for this purpose ; but it must be understood that I cannot make a binding agreement with any of them. For I would leave it entirely free to the parents to judge and choose as they shall see proper : all the share I pretend to claim is that of contributing my care and my money. If therefore any one shall be found who relies upon his own talents, he may repair thither ; but under the proviso that the said reliance is all he can count upon, so far as I am concerned. Farewell.

(Book IV, 13, tr. William Melmoth, A.D. 1746.)

Pliny is fond of describing natural scenery, and in this extract from a letter to Domitius Apollinaris he gives a picture of the surroundings of his Tuscan country-house which for minuteness of detail and accuracy of delineation has few rivals in Roman literature :

THE kind concern you expressed when you heard of my design to pass the summer at my villa in Tuscany, and your obliging endeavours to dissuade me from going to a place which you think unhealthy, are extremely agreeable to me. I

confess, indeed, the air of that part of Tuscany, which lies towards the coast, is thick and unwholesome: but my house is situated at a great distance from the sea, and at the foot of the Apennine range, so much esteemed for salubrity. But that you may lay aside all apprehensions on my account, I will give you a description of the mildness of the climate, the situation of the country, and the beauty of my villa, which I am persuaded you will hear with as much pleasure as I shall relate.

The winters are severe and cold, so that myrtles, olives, and other trees which delight in constant warmth, will not flourish here; but bay trees can grow, and even in great perfection; yet sometimes, though indeed not oftener than in the neighbourhood of Rome, they are killed by the sharpness of the seasons. The summers are exceedingly temperate; currents of air are continually stirring, though breezes are more frequent than high winds. Hence old men abound; if you were to come here and see the numbers who have adult grandchildren and great-grandchildren, and hear the stories they can entertain you with of their ancestors, you would fancy yourself born in some former age.

The aspect of the country is the most beautiful possible; figure to yourself an immense amphitheatre, such as the hand of nature could alone form. Before you lies a vast extended plain bounded by a range of mountains, whose summits are crowned with lofty and venerable woods, which supply abundance and variety of game; from hence as the mountains decline, they are adorned with under-woods. Intermixed with these are little hills of so loamy and fat a soil that it would be difficult to find a single stone upon them; their fertility is nothing inferior to the lowest grounds; and though their harvest indeed is something later, their heavy crops are as well matured. At the foot of these hills the eye is presented, wherever it turns, with one unbroken view of numberless vineyards, which are terminated below by a border, as it were, of shrubs. From thence extend meadows and fields. The soil of the latter is so extremely stiff, upon the first ploughing it rises in such vast clods, that it is necessary to go over

A Roman Country House

Pompeian wall-painting

it nine several times with the largest oxen and the strongest ploughs before they can be thoroughly broken. The flower-enamelled meadows produce trefoil and other kinds of herbage as fine and tender as if it were but just sprung up, being everywhere refreshed by never-failing rills. But though the country abounds with great plenty of water, there are no marshes; for as the ground is sloping, whatever water it receives without absorbing runs off into the Tiber. This river, which winds through the middle of the meadows, is navigable only in the winter and spring, when it transports the produce of the lands to Rome; but its contracted channel is so extremely low in summer that it resigns the name of a *great river*, which, however, it resumes in autumn.

You would be most agreeably entertained by taking a view of the face of this country from the mountains: you would imagine that not a real but some painted landscape lay before you, drawn with the most exquisite beauty and exactness; such an harmonious and regular variety charms the eye which way soever it throws itself. My villa, though situated at the foot of the mountain, commands as wide a prospect as the summit affords; you go up to it by so gentle and insensible a rise that you find yourself upon an elevation without perceiving you ascended. Behind, but at a great distance, stand the Apennine mountains; in the calmest days breezes reach us from thence, but so spent and weakened by the long tract of land they travel over that they are entirely divested of all their strength and violence.

(v. 6, tr. Melmoth.)

In his attitude to the humbler members of his household Pliny displays a humanity in advance of his age, as this letter to Paternus shows:

THE sickness which has lately run through my family, and carried off several of my domestics, some of them too in the prime of their years, has deeply afflicted me. I have two consolations, however, which, though they are not equal to so considerable a grief, still they are consolations. One is, that I

have always very readily manumitted my slaves (for their death does not seem altogether immature if they lived long enough to receive their freedom); the other, that I have allowed them to make a kind of will, which I observe as religiously as if it were good in law. I receive and obey their last requests, as so many authoritative commands, suffering them to dispose of their effects to whom they please; with this single restriction, that they leave them to some in my household, for to persons in their station the household takes the place of city and commonwealth. But though I solace myself with such reflections, I am overpowered by those very sentiments of humanity which led me to grant them that indulgence.

However, I do not therefore wish to become more callous. Others, I know, describe misfortunes of this kind by no higher term than 'a pecuniary loss', and fancy they thereby show themselves men of sense and spirit. Their wisdom and magnanimity I shall not dispute, but *men*, I am sure, they are not; for it is the very essence of human nature to *feel* those impressions of sorrow, which it yet endeavours to resist, and to admit, not to be above, consolation. But perhaps I have detained you too long upon this subject—though not so long as I would. For there is a certain luxury in grief; especially when we pour out our sorrows in the bosom of a friend, who will approve, or at least pardon, our tears. Farewell.

(viii. 16, tr. Melmoth.)

Pliny was a man of methodical habits, and contrived to arrange his time in such a way that no part of his day was wasted:

YOU desire to know in what manner I dispose of my day in summer-time at my Tuscan villa.

I rise just when I find myself in the humour, though generally with the sun; often indeed sooner, but seldom later. When I am up, I continue to keep the shutters of my chamber-windows closed. For under the influence of darkness and silence I find myself wonderfully free and abstracted from those outward

objects which dissipate attention, and left to my own thoughts; nor do I suffer my mind to wander with my eyes, but keep my eyes in subjection to my mind, which in the absence of external objects see those which are present to the mental vision. If I have any composition upon my hands, this is the time I choose to consider it, not only with respect to the general plan, but even the style and expression, which I settle and correct as if I were actually writing. In this manner I compose more or less as the subject is more or less difficult, and I find myself able to retain it. Then I call my secretary, and, opening the shutters, I dictate to him what I have composed, after which I dismiss him for a little while, and then call him in again and again dismiss him.

About ten or eleven of the clock (for I do not observe one fixed hour), according as the weather recommends, I betake myself either to the terrace or the covered portico, and there I meditate and dictate what remains upon the subject in which I am engaged. From thence I get into my chariot, where I employ myself as before, when I was walking or in my study; and find this changing of the scene preserves and enlivens my attention. At my return home I repose myself a while; then I take a walk; and after that, read aloud and with emphasis some Greek or Latin oration, not so much for the sake of strengthening my elocution as my digestion; though indeed the voice at the same time finds its account in this practice. Then I walk again, am anointed, take my exercises, and go into the bath. At supper, if I have only my wife or a few friends with me, some author is read to us; and after supper we are entertained either with music or an interlude. When that is finished, I take my walk with my domestics, in the number of which I am not without some persons of literature. Thus we pass our evenings in various conversation; and the day, even when it is at the longest, is quickly spent.

Upon some occasions, I change the order in certain of the articles above mentioned. For instance, if I have lain longer or walked more than usual, after my second sleep and reading aloud,

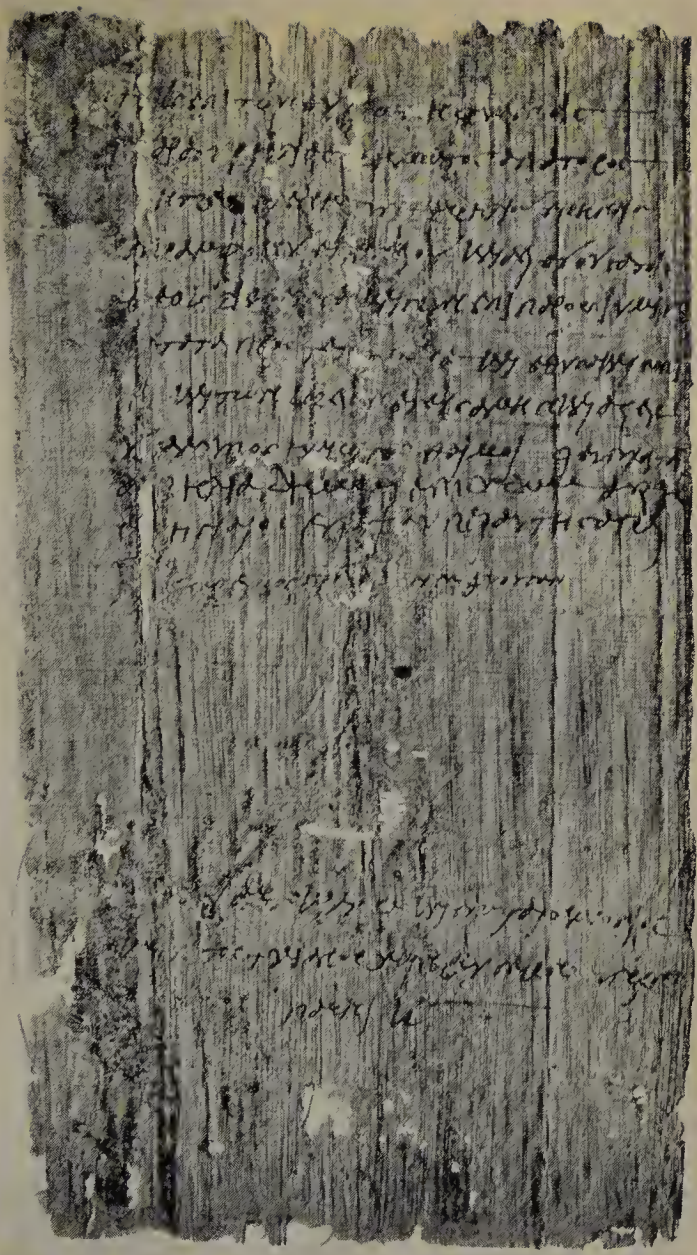
instead of using my chariot I get on horseback ; by which means I take as much exercise and lose less time. The visits of my friends from the neighbouring towns claim some part of the day ; and sometimes, by a seasonable interruption, they relieve me when I am fatigued. I now and then amuse myself with sporting, but always take my tablets into the field, that, though I should catch nothing, I may at least bring home something. Part of my time, too (though not so much as they desire), is allotted to my tenants : and I find their rustic complaints give a zest to my studies and engagements of the politer kind. Farewell.

(ix. 36, tr. Melmoth.)

We will end with the most celebrated of all his letters, written from Bithynia to the Emperor, on the question of the proper way of dealing with the Christians. This is one of the earliest pagan documents which touches upon the growth of Christianity, and although it is written from a prejudiced point of view, and shows a lamentable ignorance of the real nature of the Christian tenets, we must remember that, in the early Roman Empire, Christianity appeared dangerous and objectionable to the official mind, not so much as a religious doctrine as an unlawful association—a secret society—tending to undermine the authority of the supreme government, which attempted to buttress itself up by encouraging the traditional ' pagan ' cults and, more particularly, the worship of the Emperor himself. The answer of Trajan, which is appended, is judicious and moderate, according to his lights : it discourages active persecution, without authorizing toleration : ' Instead of displaying the implacable zeal of an inquisitor, anxious to discover the most minute particles of heresy and exulting in the number of his victims, the Emperor expresses much more solicitude to protect the security of the innocent than to prevent the escape of the guilty.' [1]

IT is a rule, Sir, which I inviolably observe, to refer myself to you in all my doubts ; for who is more capable of guiding my uncertainty or informing my ignorance ? Having never been present at any trials of the Christians, I am unacquainted with

[1] Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, ch. xvi : The Conduct of the Roman Government towards the Christians.



A later Persecution of the Christians

A Greek affidavit of recantation and heathen worship, dated A.D. 250

(*Translation.*) ' To the commissioners of sacrifices from Aurelia Demos, who has no father, daughter of Helene and wife of Aurelius Irenaeus, of the Quarter of the Helleneum. It has ever been my habit to sacrifice to the gods, and now also I have in your presence in accordance with the command, made sacrifice and libation and tasted the offering, and beg you to certify my statement. Farewell, I Aurelia Demos, have presented this declaration.'

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the method and limits to be observed either in examining or punishing them. Whether any difference is to be made on account of age, or no distinction allowed between the youngest and the adult ; whether repentance admits to a pardon, or if a man has been once a Christian it avails him nothing to recant ; whether the mere profession of Christianity, albeit without crimes, or only the crimes associated therewith are punishable—in all these points I am greatly doubtful.

In the meanwhile, the method I have observed towards those who have been denounced to me as Christians is this : I interrogated them whether they were Christians ; if they confessed it I repeated the question twice again, adding the threat of capital punishment ; if they still persevered, I ordered them to be executed. For whatever the nature of their creed might be, I could at least feel no doubt that contumacy and inflexible obstinacy deserved chastisement. There were others also possessed with the same infatuation, but being citizens of Rome,[1] I directed them to be carried thither.

These accusations spread (as is usually the case) from the mere fact of the matter being investigated and several forms of the mischief came to light. A placard was put up, without any signature, accusing a large number of persons by name. Those who denied they were, or had ever been, Christians, who repeated after me an invocation to the Gods, and offered adoration, with wine and frankincense, to your image, which I had ordered to be brought for that purpose, together with those of the Gods, and who finally cursed Christ—none of which acts, it is said, those who are really Christians can be forced into performing—these I thought it proper to discharge. Others who were named by that informer at first confessed themselves Christians, and then denied it ; true, they had been of that persuasion, but they had quitted it, some three years, others many years, and a few as

[1] Except by special delegation of the Emperor's own jurisdiction, no provincial governor had power to inflict the death penalty on a Roman citizen, but must allow him to take his trial at Rome. Cf. St. Paul's 'appeal to Cæsar', Acts xxv. 11.

many as twenty-five years ago. They all worshipped your statue and the images of the Gods, and cursed Christ.

They affirmed, however, the whole of their guilt, or their error, was, that they were in the habit of meeting on a certain fixed day before it was light, when they sang in alternate verses a hymn to Christ, as to a god, and bound themselves by a solemn oath, not to any wicked deeds, but never to commit any fraud, theft or adultery, never to falsify their word, nor deny a trust when they should be called upon to deliver it up; after which it was their custom to separate, and then reassemble to partake of food—but food of an ordinary and innocent kind.[1] Even this practice, however, they had abandoned after the publication of my edict by which, according to your orders, I had forbidden political associations. I judged it so much the more necessary to extract the real truth, with the assistance of torture, from two female slaves, who were styled *deaconesses*: but I could discover nothing more than depraved and excessive superstition.

I therefore adjourned the proceedings, and betook myself at once to your counsel. For the matter seemed to me well worth referring to you—especially considering the numbers endangered. Persons of all ranks and ages and of both sexes are, and will be, involved in the prosecution. For this contagious superstition is not confined to the cities only, but has spread through the villages and rural districts; it seems possible, however, to check and cure it. 'Tis certain at least that the temples, which had been almost deserted, begin now to be frequented; and the sacred festivals after a long intermission are again revived; while there is a general demand for sacrificial animals, which for some time past have met with but few purchasers. From hence it is easy to imagine what multitudes may be reclaimed from this error, if a door be left open to repentance.

[1] Like the medieval Jews, the early Christians were suspected of ritually murdering children, and even of drinking their blood at these 'love feasts'.

THE method you have pursued, my dear Pliny, in sifting the cases of those denounced to you as Christians is extremely proper. It is not possible to lay down any general rule which can be applied as the fixed standard in all cases of this nature. No search should be made for these people; when they are denounced and found guilty they must be punished; with the restriction, however, that when the party denies himself to be a Christian, and shall give proof that he is not (that is, by adoring our Gods), he shall be pardoned on the ground of repentance, even though he may have formerly incurred suspicion. Informations without the accuser's name subscribed must not be admitted in evidence against anyone, as it is introducing a very dangerous precedent, and by no means agreeable to the spirit of the age. (x. 96, 97, tr. Melmoth.)

Finally we will take an extract from the correspondence of MARCUS AURELIUS, Emperor from A. D. 161–180, more famous for his Greek 'Meditations', and his tutor Marcus Cornelius Fronto, whose reputation as an orator and man of letters was pre-eminent in the second century. The correspondence was rediscovered early in the nineteenth century, and is unfortunately somewhat disjointed and fragmentary. The following letter was written by Marcus Aurelius about A. D. 144, before his accession:

HAIL, most reverend master,

We are well. By a satisfactory arrangement of meals I worked from three o'clock a. m. till eight. For the next hour I paced about in slippers most contentedly before my bedroom. Then putting on my boots and donning my cloak—for we had been told to come in that dress—I went off to pay my respects to my Lord.[1]

We set out for the chase and did doughty deeds. We did hear say that boars had been bagged, for we were not lucky enough to see any. However, we climbed quite a steep hill; then in the afternoon we came home. I to my books: so taking off my

[1] The Emperor, Antoninus Pius: M. Aurelius was his adopted son and successor.

boots and doffing my dress, I passed nearly two hours on my couch, reading Cato's speech 'On the property of Pulchra', and another in which he impeached a tribune. 'Ho,' you cry to your boy, 'go as fast as you can and fetch me those speeches from the libraries of Apollo!' It is no use your sending, for those volumes, among others, have followed me here. So you must get round the librarian of Tiberius's library: a little douceur will be necessary, in which he and I can go shares when I come back to town. Well, these speeches read, I wrote a little wretched stuff, fit to be dedicated to the deities of water and fire: truly to-day I have been unlucky in my writing, the lucubration of a sportsman or a vintager, such as those whose catches ring through my bedroom, a noise every whit as hateful and wearisome as that of the law-courts. What is this I have said? Nay, 'tis true, for my master is an *orator*.

I think I must have taken a chill, whether from walking about in slippers in the early morning, or from writing badly, I know not. I only know that, rheumy enough at all times, I seem to be more drivelling than ever to-day. So I will pour the oil on my head and go off to sleep, for not a drop of it do I intend to pour into my lamp to-day, so tired am I with riding and sneezing. Farewell for my sake, dearest and sweetest of masters, whom I would make bold to say I long to see more than Rome itself.

(tr. C. R. Haines.)

LITERARY CRITICISM

LITERARY criticism is necessarily a late birth of the literary spirit. It implies on the one hand the accumulation of a considerable body of literature so that the critic may first formulate and then test his rules, on the other it requires the growth of what may be termed a literary self-consciousness, prompting in men's minds the question '*Why* and *how* does an author write?', not merely '*What* does he say to us?' The literary history of Greece furnishes an interesting example of the advance which literature must make before general questions about the art of writing are raised or investigated. In Greece, from quite early times, the Homeric poems were constantly studied and quoted, yet, until the time of Aristotle (384–322 B.C.), there is little to show that any one had seriously tried to discover the secret of their power and influence. Criticism was content to confine itself to questions of matter and to ignore those of style. Homer, in Plato's phrase,[1] was the 'educator of Greece'. He was Bible and Encyclopedia in one. Besides being a storehouse of examples for moral instruction he was expected, somewhat unreasonably, to supply exact information on technical subjects, such as war and the arts and crafts. Naturally inaccuracies and inconsistencies were easy to detect, with the result that he was accused of 'lying'—a favourite charge against the poets. Later on, in the fifth century B.C., the growing interest in philosophy and the study of language led to further criticisms. Some censured Homer's theology while his defenders endeavoured to explain away the difficulties by means of allegory. Others questioned his use of certain words and expressions. Here similarly the defence would reply either with a new interpretation or with emendation of the text. Such was the discussion which played in earlier times around the Homeric poems. Of *literary* criticism there is as yet little or nothing, though the fact that Homer continued to be studied as an educational text-book shows that his supremacy was appreciated, however uncritically. Plato indeed found himself reluctantly obliged to exclude Homer from his ideal State, chiefly on the ground that Homer and his fellow poets were mere 'imitators' and 'told lies' about the

[1] Plato, *Republic* 606 E.

gods. On the other hand we hear of Alcibiades boxing the ears of a schoolmaster, who on being asked for a text of Homer replied that he had none. The first really critical appreciation of Homer was left to Plato's pupil, Aristotle. Deducing his rules from the extant body of Greek literature, he adopted his master's term *Mimesis* (='imitation')—in the altered sense of 'representation' and not of mere slavish 'copying'. He notes that Poetry and the other fine arts are alike in resting on a common principle of 'imitation', but differ according to the means, manner, and objects of the imitation. In Poetry the *means* are rhythm, language, and harmony, the *objects* of imitation are persons in action, and the *manner* may be narrative, dramatic, or, as in Homer, a combination of both.[1] On this foundation Aristotle builds up the first systematic exposition of the art of poetry which we possess. The *Poetics*,[2] as this treatise is called, is in its present form only a fragment of the whole work, and, as it stands, deals principally with Tragedy. Aristotle was the first to lay it down that poetry should be judged from an aesthetic rather than a moral standpoint. He was also the first critic to grasp the nature of 'poetic truth'. The poet, he says, deals with universals, the historian with particular facts; so that Poetry is 'more philosophical' than History.

In the sphere of poetry Aristotle supplied a fresh equipment to criticism. In his *Rhetoric* he clarified previous thought on the subject of prose (*i. e.* oratorical) literature. Defining rhetoric as the 'art of persuasion', he makes a close analysis of human motives, character, and feelings, and of the arguments best adapted to influence each. Aristotle's critical studies in literature were continued by his successor, Theophrastus (372–287 B. C.), who wrote both on prose and on poetry. To him is attributed the division of style into the 'grand', the 'intermediate', and the 'plain', a distinction adopted later by many of the Roman writers, including Cicero.

With the beginning of the third century B. C. we pass to the Age of Scholarship. At Alexandria and, later, at Pergamum in Asia Minor, important libraries were founded and developed. Both became busy centres of learning. 'Scholarship' is an accurate term to apply to the studies of these two schools.

[1] *i. e.* Homer speaks at times in his own person, at times through the mouth of one of his characters.

[2] See Bywater's Translation, Clarendon Press, 1920. 'Aristotle, *On the Art of Poetry*.'

They were principally occupied with the preparation of commentaries on the classical writers, the study of grammar, and textual criticism. Their main contribution to literary criticism was the compilation, associated especially with the names of Aristophanes of Byzantium (257–180 B. C.) and Aristarchus (*c.* 216–143 B. C.), heads in succession of the school at Alexandria, of 'canons' or carefully selected lists of standard authors, grouped according to their subject-matter. Homer is at the head of the Epic poets, Demosthenes leads the orators, Thucydides the historians. The canons were chiefly valuable because, being drawn up with some discrimination, they stereotyped in the schools the study of the best rather than the worst authors and thus assisted to preserve the best: the order of merit which they assign to individual authors is of slighter consequence.

Both these schools came into direct contact with Rome and had an important influence upon Latin literary development. It was due to Crates of Mallos[1] that the study of Grammar was first introduced into Rome (*c.* 168 B. C.). While there on a mission from the king of Pergamum, he fell by accident into an open sewer and broke his leg. During his convalescence he amused himself by giving lectures to an enthusiastic audience. They dealt with the subject of 'Grammar', a term used in a wide sense and embracing the exercise of literary appreciation (especially that of poetry) as well as the study of formal grammar. The impulse given to the pursuit of scholarship at Rome made itself felt in various directions. A few fragments survive of the *Didascalica*, written by L. Accius, the tragic poet (170–*c.* 86 B. C.).[2] It gave a brief history in verse of Greek and Latin Poetry, special prominence being allotted to the drama.[3] His views on this and other subjects, including orthography, were adversely criticized by C. Lucilius (180–*c.* 102 B. C.),[4] the satirist, whose fragmentary remains touch on many points of critical and grammatical interest. They probably reflect the discussions of the Scipionic circle to which he belonged. Scipio Africanus the younger and his friend Laelius were its leading members. A detached reference to the late development of Roman poetry, attributed to PORCIUS LICINIUS[5] (*fl.* 90

[1] Cf. Suetonius, *de Grammaticis*, § 2.
[2] See pp. 178 ff.
[3] See Merry, *Selected Fragments of Roman Poetry*, pp. 143–4.
[4] See pp. 281 ff.
[5] or 'Licinus.'

B. C.), and forming perhaps part of a history of Latin Literature, written in not very poetical verse, may be quoted :

'Mid the second Punic warfare did the Muse with pinioned flight
Visit Romulus' rude people, who in battle take delight.[1]

To the same period belongs the versified canon of Latin Comic Poets which is the compilation of VOLCATIUS SEDIGITUS (*fl. c.* 100 B. C.).[2] The style in which it is written reminds one of the doggerel often seen in country churchyards.

WHY is't our critics hesitate to say
Which poet owns Thalia's [3] proudest bay ?
I utter sentence mid this erring throng :
Accept my canon—or be in the wrong !
Caecilius first, first prize to him I yield :
Plautus is next and leads the laggard field.
Third burning Naevius : if fourth we need,
Fourth place to thee, Licinius, I cede.
Atilius fifth, sixth Terence will I rate,
Turpilius seventh : Trabea makes eight.
Ninth Lanuvinus, tenth and last behold
Old Ennius added—great in being old !

Of the comic poets mentioned, with the exception of Terence and Plautus, we have little knowledge and scanty remains. Caecilius, though commended by other Roman writers, seems to stand too high in the ' order of merit '. Terence certainly should be ranked higher than sixth. In any event, a critic is not a judge ' placing ' the competitors in a flat-race. Sedigitus misconceived the objects and principles of the Alexandrine scholars in drawing up their lists. The real significance of Alexandrine methods was more surely grasped by the grammarian L. Aelius Stilo (*c.* 154–74 B. C.), friend of Lucilius and tutor of Varro and Cicero. Aristarchus, the Alexandrine scholar, whose name by Horace's time had come to signify all that was acute in criticism, had subjected the text of Homer to a critical recension, clearing away spurious and interpolated passages. Stilo similarly

[1] Tr. J. Wight Duff, *A Literary History of Rome*, p. 119. See Merry, *op. cit.*, p. 174.
[2] See Merry, *op. cit.*, p. 176.
[3] The Muse of Comedy.

applied himself to sifting the genuine plays from the mass of compositions then attributed to Plautus.[1] In this task he had to some extent been anticipated by Accius.[2] Stilo in his turn was to be followed by his more famous pupil, M. TERENTIUS VARRO[3] (116–27 B. C.).[4] The 'most learned of the Romans', as Quintilian calls him, just as to Cicero he was 'the most accurate of our antiquarians', Varro took all knowledge for his province. He is quoted as saying, before he was eighty, that he had already written nearly 500 books, and the total may well have reached 600 before his death. Of this prodigious output we have only fragments. The treatise on Farming and part of his 'Latin Language', which dealt principally with etymology and grammar, alone survive complete. While he was mostly concerned with the accumulation of knowledge, he shows a considerable interest in criticism. His works '*On Poets*', '*On Poems*', &c., are lost. But his satires contain many literary references. He was especially interested in Roman Comedy. He remarks that 'Caecilius deserves first place for his plots, Terence for his character-drawing, and Plautus for his dialogue'. In another passage he notes that Titinius, Terence, Atta exhibit 'truth to character' while Trabea, Atilius, Caecilius have special skill in 'exciting the emotions'. It is worth while to compare these criticisms with the canon of Sedigitus quoted above. Elsewhere Varro recognizes Theophrastus's threefold division of the styles, taking Pacuvius as a type of the 'grand', Lucilius of the 'plain', and Terence of the 'intermediate'. If we are justified, as probably we are, in taking these observations as typical of Varro's critical power, he was sensible rather than profound. Roman critics generally liked to clothe their subjects on a 'ready-to-wear' system. Varro's categories, perhaps, come from the peg, but on the whole they fit.

If Varro was Rome's most learned writer, Stilo's other pupil, M. TULLIUS CICERO (106–43 B. C.),[5] was unquestionably her greatest 'man of letters'. Oratory, letter-writing, rhetoric,

[1] Whom he greatly admired. He is said to have remarked that 'had the Muses wished to speak in Latin, they would have spoken in the language of Plautus'.

[2] See Merry, *op. cit.*, p. 145.

[3] Varro pronounced twenty-one plays to be the undoubted work of Plautus. It is generally supposed that the twenty plays which have come down to us represent Varro's selection.

[4] See pp. 285 ff., 506 ff.

[5] See pp. 93, 304 ff., 444 ff., 466 ff., 492 f.

philosophy, poetry even—there was no branch of Latin Literature on which he did not leave his mark. He himself describes his enthusiasm for literature in his speech on behalf of the Greek poet Archias, whose right to Roman citizenship had been contested. After a short technical defence of Archias's claim, he enlarges upon the utility of literature both to the individual and to the State. 'I owe my success and my courage', he says, 'to the example of old writers. Yet I am prepared to defend literature on other than utilitarian grounds.'

EVEN if we could not point to results so valuable as these, if it were merely enjoyment that was sought in such pursuits, still, I take it, you would consider a recreation like this humane and liberal. Other enjoyments are not suited to all seasons, all times of life, all places; the study of literature stimulates us in boyhood, delights us in old age, is an ornament in prosperity, a comfort and a refuge in adversity, a joy at home, no hindrance abroad; it helps us through a sleepless night, it goes with us on our travels and is our companion in the country.

(*pro Archia*, 7. 15.)

In his youth Cicero himself had translated the *Astronomica* of the Alexandrine poet Aratus into hexameters which, if of no great merit, had at any rate revealed some of the technical possibilities of Latin metre.[1] But his writings, ardent and expert as he was in the cause of literature, contain disappointingly little in the way of poetical criticism—a few scattered morsels. The most interesting of them is a reference, in a letter to his brother Quintus, to the recently published poem of Lucretius. 'The poems of Lucretius', he writes, 'are, as you say—full of flashes of genius, yet full of art.' From other passages it is clear that Cicero went back on his early flirtations with Alexandrinism and wooed a native love in the shape of the old poets Ennius, Pacuvius, and Accius, many of whose fragments owe their survival to Cicero's quotation. He has a special regard for Ennius. He praises him for the 'tenderness, sensibility, and moral earnestness' of his verses on Cassandra, and exclaims, 'Ah! what a noble poet is Ennius, despised though he be by our chanters of Euphorion.' Elsewhere, he sends Atticus a verse parodying

[1] Lucretius pays them the sincere compliment of careful imitation.

a modern mannerism, and adds, 'There, you may pass that off for your own on any of our new school of poets you like'.

The last two of these comments demand some explanation. Alexandria, already spoken of as a home of scholarship, was also a nursery of poets, among whom the great names are Callimachus, Apollonius Rhodius, and Theocritus. Broadly speaking, the school was marked by an erudition apt to luxuriate in affectations and obscurities, by supreme skill in technical elaboration working on the slenderest of subject-matter, by a delight in romantic love-situations which fostered the development of the Elegy, and by a keen interest in natural science which produced a crop of Didactic Poetry. In Rome and northern Italy much attention was devoted to this literature during the earlier part of the first century B. C. Two of the most prominent names in this movement were Parthenius, a Greek scholar-poet who settled in Rome in 72 B. C., and Valerius Cato, who acted as 'Professor of Poetry and Criticism'[1] to the school of poets which sprang up round the mouth of the Po. The group included Catullus, Calvus, and a host of minor writers, nearly all of whose work—chiefly translations—is lost. Time has dealt less hardly with Catullus. The strength of genius has maintained his verse above the sands of pedantry and 'preciousness' which engulfed the others.

These poets flourished in the warmth of mutual admiration which often does duty for criticism in a poets' circle. To take but one example—Catullus confidently predicts immortality for the *Zmyrna*, an *Epyllion* (or miniature epic) on a slight mythological theme, polished and repolished by its author, Helvius Cinna, for nine years. The obscurity of the references in the immortal work was making the reputation of commentators only a short while after its appearance. (By a strange irony only three lines have come down to us—'one for each three years of toil' a critic[2] grimly remarks!) It is fair to add that the *Zmyrna* was affectation at an absurd extreme. An immense benefit was conferred upon Roman poetry by the insistence of the 'new school' upon the need for careful craftsmanship. Cicero finds fault with the moderns, chiefly perhaps from a dislike of their trivial subject-matter and from an ultra-conservative admiration

[1] He is described by one of his contemporaries as

'Cato, the scholar, the Siren Latin-born;
He, and none other, makes and reads our poets.'

[2] Wight Duff, *op. cit.*, p. 309.

for the uncouth vigour of the older poets. We may surmise from his own record as a prose-critic that he could sympathize with their strivings after artistic perfection.

As a critic Cicero's main strength and interest lie in his exposition of the principles of oratorical prose, in the practice of which he was an acknowledged master. In his early days, with characteristic industry,[1] he had cultivated his powers by the production of rhetorical text-books. These, however, were technical works. To his later years we owe the treatment of the subject on broader lines in the *De Oratore* (55 B. C.), and in the *Brutus* and the *Orator*, written some ten years after.[2] At the time of Cicero's entry upon public life oratory at Rome had already reached a high degree of perfection. Some critics even thought that its best days were already over. Its practitioners were arrayed in two conflicting schools of thought, the Attic which preferred a severely plain and condensed style and the Asiatic which favoured a florid and elaborate one.[3] Cicero was inclined at first to follow the Asiatics, but gradually he evolved a style somewhere between the two which he himself calls Attic, denying this title to the so-called Atticists who, he thinks, forget that the Attic orators used ornament and rhythm as well as plainness of diction. He protests that oratory must appeal to the many as well as the few, and that this is the real test of the great orator.

'BUT wherefore', interrupted Atticus, 'do you say, "in your own opinion, and in that of the public at large"? In deciding the merits of an orator, does the opinion of the vulgar, think you, always coincide with that of the learned? Or rather, does not one receive the approbation of the populace,

[1] 'I never let a single day go by without some exercise in oratory,' he says of his early life. *Brutus*, 309.

[2] The *De Oratore* is didactic in tone and deals with the education of an orator, his diction and delivery. The *Orator* is an essay on the ideal orator. The *Brutus* sketches the progress of Roman oratory down to Cicero's own day and contains a masterly series of brief judgements on the various orators of Rome.

[3] The Atticists claimed to base their style on that of the older and simpler orators of Athens. The Asiatics followed the later rhetoricians who developed the rhetoric of Isocrates into an ornate style: this development seems to have taken place in the Roman province of Asia. In Cicero's day Hortensius represented Asianism, Calvus, the 'modern' poet and an orator as well, Atticism.

while another of a quite opposite character is preferred by those who are better qualified to give their judgement ?' 'You have started a very pertinent question,' said I; 'but, perhaps, the public at large will not approve my answer to it.' 'And what concern need that give you,' replied Atticus, 'if it meets the approbation of Brutus ?' 'Very true,' said I; 'for I had rather my sentiments on the qualifications of an orator should please you and Brutus, than all the world besides; but as to my eloquence, I should wish this to please every one. For he who speaks in such a manner as to please the people must inevitably receive the approbation of the learned. As to the truth and propriety of what I hear, I am indeed to judge of this for myself, as well as I am able; but the general merit of an orator must and will be decided by the effects which his eloquence produces. For (in my opinion at least) there are three things which an orator should be able to effect; viz. to inform his hearers, to please them, and to move their passions. By what qualities in the speaker each of these effects may be produced, or by what deficiencies they are either lost or but imperfectly performed, is an inquiry which none but an artist can resolve; but whether an audience is really so affected by an orator as shall best answer his purpose, must be left to their own feelings, and the decision of the public. The learned therefore, and the people at large, have never disagreed about who was a good orator, and who was otherwise.

'For do you suppose that, while the speakers mentioned above were in being, they had not the same degree of reputation among the learned as among the populace ? If you had inquired of one of the latter, who was the most eloquent man in the city, he might have hesitated whether to say Antonius or Crassus; or this man, perhaps, would have mentioned the one, and that the other. But would any one have given the preference to Philippus, though otherwise a smooth, a sensible, and a facetious speaker ? —that Philippus whom we, who form our judgement upon these matters by rules of art, have decided to have been the next in

merit? Nobody would, I am certain. For it is the invariable prerogative of an accomplished orator to be reckoned such in the opinion of the people. Though Antigenidas, therefore, the musician, might say to his scholar, who was but coldly received by the public, Play on, please me and the Muses; I shall say to my friend Brutus, when he mounts the rostra, as he frequently does, Play to me and the people; that those who hear him may be sensible of the effect of his eloquence, while I can likewise amuse myself with remarking the causes which produce it. When a citizen hears an able orator, he readily credits what is said; he imagines everything to be true, he believes and relishes the force of it; and, in short, the persuasive language of the speaker wins his absolute, his hearty assent. You, who are possessed of a critical knowledge of the art, what more will you require? The listening multitude is charmed and captivated by the force of his eloquence, and feels a pleasure which is not to be resisted. What here can you find to censure? The whole audience is either flushed with joy or overwhelmed with grief; it smiles or weeps, it loves or hates, it scorns or envies, and, in short, is alternately seized with the various emotions of pity, shame, remorse, resentment, wonder, hope, and fear, according as it is influenced by the language, the sentiments, and the delivery of the speaker. In this case, what necessity is there to await the sanction of a critic? For here, whatever is approved by the feelings of the people must be equally so by men of taste and erudition; and, in this instance of public decision, there can be no disagreement between the opinion of the vulgar and that of the learned.

(*Brutus*, 183, tr. Watson.)

From this it follows that a great style should combine all the elements of excellence, 'such an excellence', he explains, 'as is most adapted to interest the audience, yet such as will not only delight, but delight without satiety'.[1] Cicero insists that mere uninterrupted display, whether in prose or in poetry, soon palls:

[1] *De Oratore* iii, 96 ff.

the ornament ('the flowers of language and thought') should rather be concentrated on certain points, so that these may 'stand out with the brilliance of gems'.[1]

Cicero, for all his insistence on the popular appeal of great oratory, lacked nothing in appreciation of one uncompromising exponent of the austerer style. In one of those concentrated five-line essays in criticism,[2] recording his judgement on his contemporaries, he pays an unqualified tribute to the spare Atticism of Caesar.[3]

'TO the purest elegance of expression (which is equally necessary to every well-bred citizen as to an orator) Caesar has added all the various ornaments of style; so that he seems to exhibit the finest painting in the most advantageous point of view. As he has such extraordinary merit even in the tenor of his language, I must confess that there is no person I know of to whom he should yield the preference. Besides, his manner of speaking, both as to his voice and gesture, is splendid and noble, without the least appearance of artifice or affectation; and there is a dignity in his very presence which bespeaks a great and elevated mind.' 'Indeed,' said Brutus, 'his orations please me highly; for I have had the satisfaction to read several of them. He has likewise written some *Commentaries*,[4] or short memoirs, of his own transactions.' 'And such,' said I, 'as merit the highest approbation; for they are plain, correct, and graceful, and divested of all the ornaments of language, so as to appear (if I may be allowed the expression) in a kind of undress. But while he pretended only to furnish the loose materials for such as might be inclined to compose a regular history, he may, perhaps, have gratified the vanity of a few literary *friseurs*[5]; but he has certainly prevented all sensible

[1] Contrast the views of Petronius, p. 378. [2] Contained in the *Brutus*.

[3] Caesar himself took a keen interest in critical questions. He was the author of a lost treatise on Grammar from which survives the memorable advice 'avoid an unprecedented or unfamiliar word as you would a rock at sea'. He admired Terence for the purity of his style.

[4] See pp. 392 ff.

[5] *i. e.* 'those silly writers who will needs be frizzling up his exploits with the curling-tongs!' Wight Duff, *op. cit.*, p. 408.

men from attempting any improvement on his plan. For, in history, nothing is more pleasing than a correct and elegant brevity of expression.'

(*Brutus*, 261, tr. Watson.)

This last sentence leads to some consideration of Cicero's views on History, after which we may take our leave of him. In one of Cicero's works Atticus is represented as urging Cicero to 'adorn the country which he has already saved' by writing her history. The earlier Roman historians, he says, are rough and ready, careless and dull, and their writings are such as scarcely deserve the title of history. 'For History, as you also agree, is a task which more than any other requires rhetorical treatment, and so is just suited to your powers.' This view—that history is the province of oratory—is the complement of that expressed in the *De Oratore*, namely, that the study of history is part of the business of the orator, an opinion shared, as will subsequently be shown, by Quintilian.[1] To us the notion of 'rhetorical treatment' suggests an incongruity—how, we wonder, can rhetoric be consistent with a dispassionate presentation of the facts? All that can be said is that here Cicero is neither behind nor ahead of the judgement of his age. History since the time of the Greek historians, Ephorus and Theopompus, the pupils of Isocrates, had been regarded as a field for rhetorical display. Even their predecessor, Thucydides, most philosophical of ancient historians, shows more than traces of rhetorical influence. Oratory, in Cicero's eyes, embraces the whole field of knowledge and education, and therefore inevitably includes history. The general recognition of this doctrine in classical times may be inferred from the fact that Livy's History of Rome, in spite of its defects, was never really superseded.[2]

Literary criticism in Q. HORATIUS FLACCUS (65–8 B.C.)[3] is first found in his Satires, where though admitting his obligations to Lucilius he is not afraid to censure him for his inconsequence and want of care for literary form.[4] For his own Satires he expressly disclaims the title of poetry in words interesting both as a piece of typical self-scrutiny and because they give the key of much of his later criticism.

[1] See p. 380.
[2] See the remarks on Livy, p. 404.
[3] See pp. 69 ff., 166, 288 ff., 335 ff.
[4] See p. 288.

FIRST, be it understood, I make no claim
To rank with those who bear a poet's name :
'Tis not enough to turn out lines complete,
Each with its proper quantum of five feet,
Colloquial verse a man may write like me,
But (trust an author) 'tis not poetry.
No ; keep that name for genius, for a soul
Of Heaven's own fire, for words that grandly roll.
Hence some have questioned if the Muse we call
The Comic Muse be really one at all :
Her subject ne'er aspires, her style ne'er glows,
And, save that she talks metre, she talks prose.
' Ay but the angry father shakes the stage,
When on his graceless son he pours his rage ' . . .
Well, could Pomponius' sire to life return,
Think you he'd rate his son in tones less stern ?
So then 'tis not sufficient to combine
Well-chosen words in a well-ordered line,
When, take away the rhythm, the self-same words
Would suit an angry father off the boards.
Strip what I write, or what Lucilius wrote,
Of cadence and succession, time and note,
Reverse the order, put those words behind
That went before, no poetry you'll find :
But break up this, ' *When battle's brazen door*
Blood-boltered Discord from its fastenings tore,' [1]
'Tis Orpheus mangled by the Maenads : still
The bard remains, unlimb him as you will.

(*Sat.* i. 4, 39–62, tr. Conington.)

Poetry to Horace is a specialized and exclusive craft, requiring special talent and an infinitude of care. Just as Cicero's picture of the ideal orator is an elaborate piece of self-portraiture, so is Horace expounding the theory of which he himself is the supreme practitioner. His fundamental precepts

[1] A line from Ennius.

are amplified in the *Letter to the Pisos*,[1] written some ten or fifteen years later. Long known by the misleading title—which would doubtless have drawn a smile from the author—of *The Art of Poetry*, this work has never ceased to influence literary thought, noticeably in England from the time of Spenser and Jonson downwards, and, most of all, in the early eighteenth century. It is no formal treatise, but a collection of aphorisms, often commonplace but always perfect in expression and practical in outlook. 'The labour of the file' (said of the conscientious artist), 'The mountain labours and the mouse is born' (of the pretentious writer of epic), 'Homer nodding', 'The purple patch'—these and many other instances show how admirably Horace conforms to Pope's definition of 'wit':

'What oft was thought, but ne'er so well expressed.'

This 'painstaking felicity'[2] of expression is not, however, Horace's only merit. Practical hints abound, limited in view perhaps, but always full of shrewd sense. 'Listen to the voice of criticism—your own and others',' 'Be slow to publish, quick to destroy'

('What's kept at home you cancel by a stroke:
What's sent abroad you never can revoke'),

above all, 'study consistency, proportion, order,' 'avoid extremes'—these are characteristic maxims. 'They have still their value, and were particularly suited to an age when there were so many aspirants to literary fame, and when flattery was often made a substitute for candid criticism.'[3]

Selection from so quotable a work is a difficult task. The choice of the two passages which follow is due to their historical interest. In the first Horace recommends a return to the Greeks, the inventors and perfecters of all types of Drama.[4] Rome's carelessness alone has prevented her from rivalling the Greeks in literature as in arms.

[1] Based upon an essay on poetry by one Neoptolemus of Parium, an Alexandrian writer of uncertain date. It is odd that Horace should go to Neoptolemus in preference to Aristotle's *Poetics*, yet not more so than that Cicero's philosophical essays should be based on the successors of Plato and Aristotle and not on the masters themselves.

[2] See p. 378.

[3] D'Alton, *Horace and His Age*, p. 254.

[4] Notice that Horace here, as often in the treatise, is concerned particularly with the Drama (cf. pp. 185–6).

MY friends, make Greece your model when you write,
And turn her volumes over day and night.
'But Plautus pleased our sires, the good old folks:
They praised his numbers and they praised his jokes.'
They did: 'twas mighty tolerant in them
To praise, where wisdom would perhaps condemn;
That is, if you and I and our compeers
Can trust our tastes, our fingers, and our ears,
Know polished wit from horse-play, and can tell
What verses do, and what do not run well.

After a brief sketch of the progress of Tragedy and Comedy in Greece, he continues:

OUR poets have tried all things; nor do they
Deserve least praise, who follow their own way,
And tell in comedy or history-piece
Some story of home-growth, not drawn from Greece.
Nor would the land we love be now more strong
In warrior's prowess than in poet's song,
Did not her bards with one consent decline
The tedious task, to alter and refine.
Dear Pisos! as you prize old Numa's blood,
Set down that work, and that alone, as good,
Which, blurred and blotted, checked and counter-checked,
Has stood all tests, and issued forth correct.
Because Democritus thinks fit to say,
That wretched art to genius must give way,[1]
Stands at the gate of Helicon, and guards
Its precinct against all but crazy bards,

[1] It is only fair to Horace to add his views on the relation of 'art' and 'inspiration' which occur later in the treatise:

But here occurs a question some men start,
If good verse comes from nature or from art.
For me, I cannot see how native wit
Can e'er dispense with art, or art with it.
Set them to pull together, they're agreed,
And each supplies what each is found to need.
(*Ars Poet.*, 408 ff., tr. Conington.)

Our witlings keep long nails and untrimmed hair,
Much in brown studies, in the bath-room rare.
For things are come to this ; the merest dunce,
So but he choose, may start up bard at once,
Whose head, too hot for hellebore [1] to cool,
Was ne'er submitted to a barber's tool.
What ails me now, to dose myself each spring ?
Else had I been a very swan to sing.
Well, never mind : mine be the whetstone's lot,
Which makes steel sharp, though cut itself will not.
Although no writer, I may yet impart
To writing folk the precepts of their art,
Whence come its stores, what trains and forms a bard,
And how a work is made, and how 'tis marred.

(*Ars Poet.*, 261 ff., tr. Conington.)

We may observe in this ' return to the Greeks ' a divergence from the principles of his immediate predecessors. Here as elsewhere Horace shows little sympathy with the older Roman poets whom in early youth he had been obliged to study under the eye and rod of his master Orbilius ' the flogger '. It is their artlessness which he most deplores. In this dislike a Varro or a Cicero could hardly have shared, though the Alexandrines would have supported him in his plea for careful workmanship, and with this side of Alexandrinism Horace would have been in full accord. His advice to a would-be poet to keep his lay locked up ' for full nine years ' has indeed been thought to contain a direct reference to Cinna's *Zmyrna*.[2] Where he parts company with the ' moderns ' is in commending the broad and healthy spirit of classical Greek literature as a better pattern for imitation than the pedantic dilettantism of Alexandria.

Horace is evidently in conflict with current criticism in another passage dealing with ' poetic diction '.

IN words again be cautious and select,
And duly pick out this, and that reject.
High praise and honour to the bard is due
Whose dexterous setting makes an old word new.

[1] The ancient cure for madness.

[2] See p. 359.

Nay more, should some recondite subject need
Fresh signs to make it clear to those who read,
A power of issuing terms till now unused,
If claimed with modesty, is ne'er refused.
New words will find acceptance, if they flow
Forth from the Greek, with just a twist or so.
But why should Rome capriciously forbid
Our bards from doing what their fathers did?
Or why should Plautus and Caecilius gain
What Virgil or what Varius asks in vain?
Nay, I myself, if with my scanty wit
I coin a word or two, why grudge me it,
When Ennius and old Cato boldly flung
Their terms broadcast, and amplified our tongue?
To utter words stamped current by the mill
Has always been thought right and always will.
When forests shed their foliage at the fall,
The earliest born still drops the first of all:
So fades the elder race of words, and so
The younger generations bloom and grow.

(*Ars Poet.*, 46 ff., tr. Conington.)

It is known that the Augustans—the poets, at any rate—deliberately cultivated a literary language from which all 'vulgar' words were excluded. Diminutives and compound words—at all times a feature of the spoken language, and the source of much of the peculiar charm found in Catullus's poetry in a previous generation—have scarcely a place in Horace or Virgil. Horace, again, though avoiding the uncompromising purism of a Julius Caesar, insists on 'usage' as being the only sound canon for the choice of words. New words and compounds *may* be admitted, but only if analogy, especially Greek analogy, supports them. Virgil, during and after his life, was pursued, as Homer had been, by a host of petty detractors who found particular fault with his innovations. Such innovations were Graecisms both of grammar and vocabulary, and the use of old words in new senses, a supposed fault which even his friend

Agrippa censured.[1] Evidently Horace is here forestalling the critics by an explicit defence of the Augustan practice.

The main outlines of Horace's literary opinions have now been traced. The picture may be completed by a few excerpts from the two literary letters of the second book of the *Epistles*. The theme of both is familiar—it is a defence of his school and its principles. In the first he protests against the unreasoning depreciation of contemporary poetry and the admiration of mere antiquity.[2] The following passage contains a neat summary of contemporary, possibly Varronian, opinion :

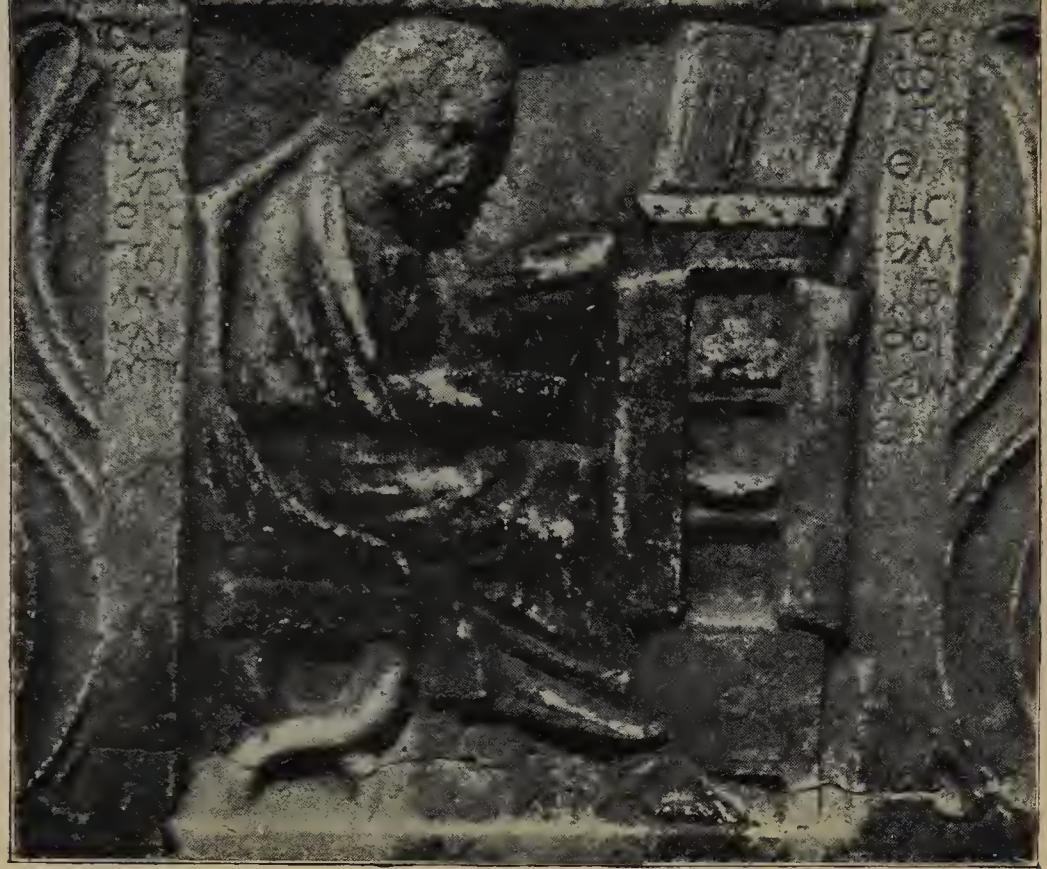
> ENNIUS, the stout and wise, in critic phrase
> The analogue of Homer in these days,
> Enjoys his ease, nor cares how he redeems
> The gorgeous promise of his peacock dreams.
> Who reads not Naevius ? still he lives enshrined
> A household god in every Roman mind.
> So as we reckon o'er the heroic band
> We call Pacuvius learned, Accius grand ;
> Afranius wears Menander's robe with grace ;
> Plautus moves on at Epicharmus' pace ;
> In force and weight Caecilius bears the palm ;
> While Terence—ay, refinement is his charm.
> These are Rome's classics ; these to see and hear
> She throngs the bursting playhouse year by year.
>
> (*Ep.* ii. 1. 50–61, tr. Conington.)

It is in this poem, in a sketch of Latin literary development, that the well-known verses occur :

> Greece, conquered Greece, her conqueror subdued,
> And Rome grew polished, who till then was rude.
>
> (*Ep.* ii. 1. 155–6, tr. Conington).

[1] Two examples may be given : ' a murky smell ' means a smell of murky smoke, and ' branches crackling with laurel ' means crackling branches of laurel.

[2] He asks : ' Had Greece but been as carping and as cold
To new productions, what would now be old ? '



THE STUDY. In this relief a Greek Physician is reading a work which is in nine rolls. Eight are arranged in a pyramid in the Armarium, and he is holding the ninth in his hand

Finally, a complimentary reference to the court-poets, Virgil and Varius, and a note on the utilitarian side of poetry, the tone of which recalls Cicero's *Pro Archia*:

STILL, bards there are whose excellence commends
The sovereign judgment that esteems them friends,
Virgil and Varius; when your [1] hand confers
Its princely bounty, all the world concurs.
And, trust me, human features never shone
With livelier truth through brass or breathing stone
Than the great genius of a hero shines
Through the clear mirror of a poet's lines.

(*Ep.* ii. 1. 245–9, tr. Conington.)

The second letter has an amusing picture of mutual admiration amongst members of the same literary group. Much of Latin Literature was produced by members of this or that coterie—we need only recall the Scipionic circle, the clique of North Italian poets and the rival societies which clustered round Maecenas and Messala. Horace's butt here is probably Propertius, who like himself lived under the wing of Maecenas.

TWO brothers, counsellor and pleader, went
Through life on terms of mutual compliment;
That thought the other Gracchus, this supposed
His brother Mucius; so they praised and prosed.
Our tuneful race the self-same madness goads:
My friend writes elegies, and I write odes:
O how we puff each other! 'Tis divine;
The Muses had a hand in every line.'
Remark our swagger as we pass the dome [2]
Built to receive the future bards of Rome;
Then follow us and listen what we say,
How each by turns awards and takes the bay.
Like Samnite fencers,[3] with elaborate art
We hit in tierce to be hit back in quart.

[1] The letter is addressed to Augustus.
[2] i. e. the Palatine Library, full of Greek poetry, but waiting for Latin contributions.
[3] i. e. we have a sort of sham fight.

I'm dubbed Alcaeus, and retire in force :
And who is he ? Callimachus of course :
Or, if 'tis not enough, I bid him rise
Mimnermus,[1] and he swells to twice his size.
Writing myself, I'm tortured to appease
Those wasp-like creatures, our poetic bees :
But when my pen's laid down, my sense restored,
I rest from boring, rest from being bored.

(*Ep.* ii. 2. 87–105.)

Of the lines next quoted a competent critic[2] says that they 'are not only as admirable practical advice on the cultivation of style as any ever given, but explain the secret of Horace's own ease in writing'. Even those who censure Horace for his 'golden mediocrity' and his want of deep feeling admit the essential charm and beauty which invest his picture of the ideal Latin poet.

BAD poets are our jest : yet they delight,
Just like their betters, in whate'er they write,
Hug their fool's paradise, and, if you're slack
To give them praise, themselves supply the lack.
But he who meditates a work of art,
Oft as he writes, will act the censor's part :
Is there a word wants nobleness and grace,
Devoid of weight, unworthy of high place ?
He bids it go, though stiffly it decline,
And cling and cling, like suppliant to a shrine :
Choice terms, long hidden from the general view,
He brings to day and dignifies anew,
Which, once on Cato's and Cethegus' lips,
Now pale their light and suffer dim eclipse ;
New phrases, in the world of books unknown,
So use but father them, he makes his own :
Fluent and limpid, like a crystal stream,
He makes Rome's soil with genial produce teem.

(*Ep.* ii. 2. 105–121, tr. Conington.)

[1] Of Colophon, a Greek elegiac poet of the time of Solon.
[2] W. Y. Sellar, *Horace and the Elegiac Poets*, p. 110.

The intolerance or bias shown in Horace's (and Cicero's) judgements upon Roman poets has no place in the literary surveys found more than once in the poems of P. OVIDIUS NASO (43 B. C.–17 A. D.).[1] They abound in generous eulogy, sometimes more generous than discriminating.[2] Ovid's habit is to sum up each poet's qualities in a concise epithet. Ennius is

Supreme in genius, unrefined in art.

Callimachus, conversely, has 'art' without 'genius'. Doubtless some epithets are conventional or superficial. Yet Ovid recognizes—as few of his contemporaries seem to have done—the sublime element in Lucretius's poetry:

Poet sublime, thy song shall ever sound
Till one day's havoc all the earth confound.

The decline in post-Augustan times of both oratory and poetry is a commonplace. What is less familiar is the fact that some at any rate of the Roman writers soon realized and sought to account for it. The first of these is C. VELLEIUS PATERCULUS (*c.* 19 B. C.–31 A. D.),[3] who interposes in his outline of history three literary passages [4] one of which attempts to explain the decline as due to a natural law of rise and fall.[5]

I CANNOT resist the temptation to state here a problem which I have often pondered, without ever succeeding in clearing it up. Can we sufficiently express the strangeness of the fact that in each branch (of literature or art) the leading intellects have taken the same cast and foregathered in the same brief period? The period of a human life—and no long one either—saw tragedy become brilliant through men of more than mortal genius, Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides; another such period did the same for the Old Comedy, under the hands of Cratinus, Aristophanes, and Eupolis. Menander, with Philemon and Diphilus (as close to him in workmanship as they were in date), produced the New Comedy and left it perfect

[1] See pp. 123 ff., 153 ff., 242 ff.

[2] He is as ready to prophesy immortality for e. g. Aratus, the meteorological poet of Alexandria, as for Homer.

[3] See pp. 414 ff.

[4] The other two are conventional lists in the manner of the 'grammarians' and less sensible than some, e. g. in a list of Augustan poets Horace does not appear, while Virgil is bracketed with a poetaster, Rabirius.

[5] The excellent translation quoted is from Prof. W. C. Summers, *The Silver Age of Latin Literature*, pp. 145–6.

beyond all possibility of imitation, all within the space of a very few years. The philosophers again, whose stream descends from the lips of Socrates, and whose names I enumerated just now, how long after the death of Plato and Aristotle did they flourish ? What great name is there in eloquence before Isocrates or after his pupils and theirs ? So narrow the period here that every one that merits mention might have seen or been seen by his fellows.

And this holds good for Rome as much as Greece. Unless you go back to rough, tyro performances, praiseworthy only as pioneer work, Roman tragedy means Accius and his contemporaries, and the brilliant period of the pleasant humour of Latin comedy was due to Caecilius, Terence, and Afranius—all of about the same age. So with the historians : reckon Livy to the age preceding ours, and (apart from Cato and some early and little-known writers) they are the outcome of barely eighty years—and the productive period of poetry goes back no earlier and comes down no later. As for the eloquence of statesman or barrister, the perfect form of prose expression, I maintain, with apologies to Crassus, Scipio, Laelius, the Gracchi, Fannius, and Galba, that, leaving Cato again out of the reckoning, the time of general efflorescence is that of its chief representative Cicero. Very few of his predecessors give pleasure, and there is not an orator who deserves respect but what either he may have seen Cicero or Cicero him. And any one who studies chronology will find the same thing applies to grammar, sculpture, and painting : the best period of each art is comprised within very narrow limits of time.

I often try to find reasons for this phenomenon . . . but find none in whose correctness I feel confidence, some that are perhaps probable, and, in particular, these. Emulation it is that encourages talent : sometimes envy, sometimes admiration, fires the desire to imitate. Now Nature ordains that that which is the object of the highest endeavour shall reach the highest level ; perfection is not easily maintained, and it is the law of Nature that what cannot go forward must go back. At the outset we are hot to catch up those we reckon ahead of us, but, once we abandon

hope of passing or equalling them, with our hope dies our interest: it ceases to aim at a goal it can never attain, regards this particular province as now appropriated, and looks round for a new one.

The insight shown in the last paragraph is remarkable in a man who, like Velleius, has no claims to be considered a serious historian and was probably a better soldier than writer. But the cause to which he attributes the decline is only one of many, political and social as well as literary. Two further reasons (besides the undoubted fact—implied by Velleius—that the very perfection of the Augustan writers drove many of their successors in despair off the main roads of literature to seek at whatever cost any original effects that might be gathered in its by-paths) will here be noticed. Both are literary, and both are symptomatic of the new era.

The first is the introduction of public readings by the poets before a critical audience. The original object no doubt was to obtain friendly criticism of as yet unpublished work. When the practice first began we are uncertain. It is usually attributed to Asinius Pollio[1] (76 B. C.–5 A. D.), but there were literary salons and, we may be sure, semi-public readings before Pollio. Horace as early as 35 B. C. has a significant reference to the custom as something already well established.[2] The 'Recitations' grew more and more popular after the time of Augustus. In the younger Pliny's day (*c.* 61 A. D.–*c.* 113 A. D.) attendance at them had become a social duty of an almost intolerable character. As ever-growing crowds of amateurs thronged the recitation halls, independent criticism, the original object of these gatherings, was exchanged for an uncritical enthusiasm which became conventional. The effect on poetry of the Recitations was to give it a definitely rhetorical cast. Extravagances were introduced to secure an effect however momentary. Form was submerged in the diffuseness characteristic of Silver Latin Poetry and clearly rhetorical in its origin.[3]

[1] Pollio was a patron of poets and the friend of Virgil. From the few scattered remarks attributed to him, he was evidently a discerning and fearless critic. He detected plagiarism in Sallust, inaccuracies in Caesar, and provincialisms in Livy. He founded the first public library in Rome.

[2] Cf. Horace, *Sat.* I. iv, l. 23: 'Loath as I am in public to recite.' And *ib.*, ll. 71–2:

'Nor read I save to friends, and that when pressed,
Not to chance auditor or casual guest.'

[3] Diffuseness is here said to be rhetorical on the principle that you have only to say a thing often enough to be believed. Virgil is diffuse—

Side by side with the Recitations went a more pervading and more pernicious influence in the vogue of 'Declamations'[1] or set speeches on prescribed themes, delivered in the schools of rhetoric. Rhetoric had for a long time been an important element in Roman education. Originally it had served much the same purpose as the debating clubs of our public schools and universities or the 'moot courts' sometimes held by legal societies. The young Roman learned how to get up a brief or to speak elegantly and fluently on a debating subject. He was often required to speak in the character of some personage, taken usually from history, and in this way received a vivid training of the imagination. The growing craze for novelty gradually caused the teachers of rhetoric to cast about for sensational themes, however divorced from the probabilities of human life, with a strong preference for those which afforded most scope for original treatment. Much misplaced ingenuity was devoted to these unreal discussions. In literature their consequences were an insincerity of treatment and a craving at all costs for point and paradox, culminating in the Epigrammatic or 'Pointed' style. Seneca among prose-writers and Lucan among poets are its typical exponents.

One aspect of the decadence—its insincerity—is touched on by A. PERSIUS FLACCUS (34–62 A. D.),[2] who devotes his first Satire to the subject.[3]

HOURLY we see some raw pin-feathered thing
Attempt to mount, and Fights and Heroes sing;
Who for false quantities was whipt at School
But t'other day, and breaking Grammar-rule;
Whose trivial Art was never try'd, above
The bare description of a Native Grove:
Who knows not how to praise the Country Store,
The Feasts, the Baskets, nor the fatted Boar. . . .
Some love to hear the Fustian Poet roar,

he repeats and amplifies the simplest sentence in order to make his meaning perfectly clear—and he is therefore 'rhetorical' in this sense. But we do not call him a 'rhetorical' poet simply. There are other qualities in his poetry—qualities which later poets lacked. Of these sincerity is not the least.

[1] See also the section on Story-telling and the Novel, p. 246.

[2] See pp. 301 ff. [3] The translation is Dryden's free but lively version.

And some on Antiquated Authors pore :
Rummage for sense ; and think those only good
Who labour most, and least are understood.
Others, by foolish Ostentation led,
When call'd before the Bar, to save their Head,
Bring trifling Tropes, instead of solid Sense :
And mind their Figures more than their Defence.
Are pleas'd to hear their thick-scull'd Judges cry :
Well mov'd, oh finely said, and decently !
Theft (says th' Accuser) to thy charge I lay,
O Pedius : What does gentle Pedius say ?
Studious to please the Genius of the Times,
With Periods, Points, and Tropes he slurs his Crimes :
' He Robbed not, but he Borrow'd from the Poor :
And took but with Intention to restore.'
Effeminate Roman, shall such Stuff prevail
To tickle thee, and make thee wag thy Tail ?
(*Sat.* i. 69–87, tr. Dryden.)

To the other aspect of the decadence—its extravagances—frequent reference is made in the *Satyricon* of C. PETRONIUS (*ob.* A. D. 66).[1] He diagnoses acutely the literary disease from which the age was suffering, attributing it to the unwholesome diet of the rhetorical schools.[2] A passage, put into the mouth of a ' spouting ' poet, Eumolpus, is a partly ironical description of contemporary practice. Lucan, in his *Pharsalia*,[3] flouting the epic convention of ' divine interpositions ', had dealt with the subject of the Civil War on more or less historical lines. To Eumolpus this is a deadly breach of Epic orthodoxy.[4]

YES, my young friends, poetry has led many astray. As soon as a man has shaped his verse in feet and woven into it a more delicate meaning with an ingenious circumlocution, he thinks that forthwith he has scaled Helicon. In this

[1] See pp. 257 ff.
[2] § 1. See p. 246. Compare also Tacitus, *Dialogus*, c. 35 (quoted on p. 386).
[3] See pp. 55 ff.
[4] In the three hundred specimen lines which Eumolpus incontinently proceeds to declaim we are offered a not very convincing demonstration of mythological treatment.

fashion people who are tired out with forensic oratory often take refuge in the calm of poetry as in some happier haven, supposing that a poem is easier to construct than a declamation adorned with quivering epigrams. But nobler souls do not love such coxcombry, and the mind cannot conceive or bring forth its fruit unless it is steeped in the vast flood of literature. One must flee away from all diction that is, so to speak, cheap, and choose words divorced from popular use, putting into practice, 'I hate the common herd and hold it afar.'[1] Besides, one must take care that the epigrams do not stand out from the body of the speech: they must shine with a brilliancy that is woven into the material.[2] Homer proves this, and the lyric poets, and Roman Virgil, and the studied felicity of Horace.[3] The others either did not see the path that leads to poetry, or saw it and were afraid to walk in it. For instance, any one who attempts the vast theme of the Civil War will sink under the burden unless he is full of literature. It is not a question of recording real events in verse; historians can do that far better. The free spirit of genius must plunge headlong into allusions and divine interpositions, and rack itself for epigrams coloured by mythology, so that what results seems rather the prophecies of an inspired seer than the exactitude of a statement made on oath before witnesses. (*Satyr.* § 118, tr. Heseltine.)

Petronius's evidently sincere admiration for the classic tradition of Virgil and Horace has its counterpart a few years later in Quintilian's championship of Cicero in oratory. M. FABIANUS QUINTILIANUS[4]—to give him his Roman name—was the author of a work known as the *Institutio Oratoria* (or *Education of an Orator*), the most exhaustive treatise on the subject ever attempted. He lavished on it all the devout enthusiasm for his profession accumulated in his experience not only as a teacher

[1] Compare with this the Augustan theory of diction (p. 369). The quotation is—significantly—from Horace (*Odes*, iii. 1).

[2] Contrast with this view Cicero's remark on 'ornament' in prose and poetry (p. 363).

[3] For this admirably terse criticism, compare the references to Horace both in this Section (pp. 364 ff.) and those on Lyric (pp. 69 ff.) and Satire (pp. 288 ff).

[4] His dates are A.D. *c.* 35–95.

of eloquence but as a busy practitioner in the courts. In the twelve books which make up the work he ranges with methodical rapture over every detail bearing the least relation to the education and training of an orator—from his early life and schooling and his declamatory exercises through all the practical details of pleading and the arrangement, style, and delivery of his speeches. The ideal reading for the nascent orator is discussed in Book x. In it Quintilian reviews Greek and Latin Literature and passes judgement in succession on the more important writers in either tongue. The standpoint from which he criticizes is illustrated in the following passage :

THEOPHRASTUS says that the reading of poets is of great service to the orator, and has rightly been followed in this view by many. For the poets will give us inspiration as regards the matter, sublimity of language, and the appropriate treatment of character, while minds that have become jaded owing to the daily wear and tear of the courts will find refreshment in such agreeable study. Consequently Cicero recommends the relaxation provided by the reading of poetry. We should, however, remember that the orator must not follow the poets in everything, more especially in their freedom of language and their licence in the use of figures. Poetry has been compared to the oratory of display, and further, aims solely at giving pleasure, which it seeks to secure by inventing what is not merely untrue, but sometimes even incredible. Further, we must bear in mind that it can be defended on the ground that it is tied by certain metrical necessities and consequently cannot always use straightforward and literal language, but is driven from the direct road to take refuge in certain by-ways of expression, and compelled not to lengthen, contract, transpose or divide them, whereas the orator stands armed in the forefront of the battle, fights for a high stake and devotes all his effort to winning the victory. And yet I would not have his weapons defaced by mould and rust, but would have them shine with a splendour that shall strike terror to the heart of the foe, like the flashing steel that dazzles heart and eye at once, not like the gleam of gold or silver,

which has no warlike efficacy and is even a positive peril to its wearer.

History,[1] also, may provide the orator with a nutriment which we may compare to some rich and pleasant juice. But when we read it we must remember that many of the excellences of the historian require to be shunned by the orator. For history has a certain affinity to poetry and may be regarded as a kind of prose poem, while it is written for the purpose of narrative, not of proof, and designed from beginning to end not for immediate effect or the instant necessities of forensic strife, but to record events for the benefit of posterity and to win glory for its author. Consequently, to avoid monotony of narrative, it employs unusual words and indulges in a freer use of figures. Therefore, as I have already said, the famous brevity of Sallust, than which nothing can be more pleasing to the leisured ear of the scholar, is a style to be avoided by the orator in view of the fact that his words are addressed to a judge who has his mind occupied by a number of thoughts and is also frequently uneducated, while, on the other hand, the milky fullness of Livy is hardly of a kind to instruct a listener who looks not for beauty of exposition, but for truth and credibility.

(*Inst. Or.* x. i. 27–32, tr. H. E. Butler.)

The ' famous brevity ' of Sallust[2] and the ' milky fullness ' of Livy are two of many neat characterizations. Quintilian's verdicts as a whole are happier when he is dealing with Latin authors than with Greek and with prose-writers than with poets. His limitations are largely inherent in the plan of his work. Admittedly his object is to suggest a course of study which may form style or the ' body of eloquence ', a consideration often overlooked by those who find much of his criticism unoriginal, inadequate, or both. He often acknowledges that he is not

[1] Compare with Quintilian's remarks on History the views of Cicero (p. 364) and Pliny (pp. 387–9). The passages taken together give us a valuable insight into the theory and practice of Roman historical writing. Livy, whose work has often been described as a ' prose epic ', furnishes a good example of the ' affinity of history to poetry '.

[2] He speaks elsewhere of his ' immortal rapidity '.

stating an independent view of his own, and if he dismisses Lucretius as 'difficult'[1] and Catullus as 'a lampoonist' his characterizations of Horace, whose 'boldness in the choice of words is only equalled by his felicity', and of Ovid, who might have risen to any heights 'had he been ready to curb his talents instead of indulging them', may be set beside his compact descriptions of Herodotus as 'pleasant, lucid, diffuse' and of Thucydides as 'close in texture, terse and ever eager to press forward'.

Two of his longer criticisms are reproduced below. That which follows immediately is an admirably expressed appreciation of one who was his chief, though not his only,[2] master—Cicero.

BUT it is our orators, above all, who enable us to match our Roman eloquence against that of Greece. For I would set Cicero against any one of their orators without fear of refutation. I know well enough what a storm I shall raise by this assertion, more especially since I do not propose for the moment to compare him with Demosthenes; for there would be no point in such a comparison, as I consider that Demosthenes should be the object of special study, and not merely studied, but even committed to memory. I regard the excellences of these two orators as being for the most part similar, that is to say, their judgement, their gift of arrangement, their methods of division, preparation and proof, as well as everything concerned with invention. In their actual style there is some difference. Demosthenes is more concentrated, Cicero more diffuse; Demosthenes makes his periods shorter than Cicero, and his weapon is the rapier, whereas Cicero's periods are longer, and at times he employs the bludgeon as well: nothing can be taken from the former, nor added to the latter; the Greek reveals a more studied, the Roman a more natural art. As regards wit and the power of exciting pity, the two most powerful instruments where the feelings are concerned, we have the advantage. Again, it is

[1] Quintilian's contemporary, the poet Statius, speaks more happily of the 'soaring frenzy of learned Lucretius'.

[2] Cf. Quintilian, x. 2. 24: 'It does not follow that because we should select one author for special imitation he should be our only model.'

possible that Demosthenes was deprived by national custom of the opportunity of producing powerful perorations, but against this may be set the fact that the different character of the Latin language debars us from the attainment of those qualities which are so much admired by the adherents of the Attic school. As regards their letters, which have in both cases survived, and dialogues, which Demosthenes never attempted, there can be no comparison between the two. But, on the other hand, there is one point in which the Greek has undoubted superiority: he comes first in point of time, and it was largely due to him that Cicero was able to attain greatness. For it seems to me that Cicero, who devoted himself heart and soul to the imitation of the Greeks, succeeded in reproducing the force of Demosthenes, the copious flow of Plato, and the charm of Isocrates. But he did something more than reproduce the best elements in each of these authors by dint of careful study; it was to himself that he owed most of, or rather all his excellences, which spring from the extraordinary fertility of his immortal genius. For he does not, as Pindar says, 'collect the rain from heaven, but wells forth with living water,' since Providence at his birth conferred this special privilege upon him, that eloquence should make trial of all her powers in him. For who can instruct with greater thoroughness, or more deeply stir the emotions? Who has ever possessed such a gift of charm? He seems to obtain as a boon what in reality he extorts by force, and when he wrests the judge from the path of his own judgement the latter seems not to be swept away, but merely to follow. Further, there is such weight in all that he says that his audience feel ashamed to disagree with him, and the zeal of the advocate is so transfigured that it has the effect of the sworn evidence of a witness, or the verdict of a judge. And at the same time all these excellences, of which scarce one could be attained by the ordinary man even by the most concentrated effort, flow from him with every appearance of spontaneity, and his style, although no fairer has ever fallen on the ears of men, none the less displays the utmost felicity and ease. It was not,

therefore, without good reason that his own contemporaries spoke of his 'sovereignty' at the bar, and that for posterity the name of Cicero has come to be regarded not as the name of a man but as the name of eloquence itself. Let us, therefore, fix our eyes on him, take him as our pattern, let the student realize that he has made real progress if he is a passionate admirer of Cicero.

(*Inst. Or.* x. 1. 105–12, tr. Butler.)

But loyalty to Cicero did not disable the critic. In the following estimate of Seneca, Quintilian shows remarkable fairness towards a writer whose 'pointed style' represents a fashion in utter conflict with Quintilian's own precepts:

I HAVE deliberately postponed the discussion of Seneca in connexion with the various departments of literature owing to the fact that there is a general, though false, impression that I condemn and even detest him. It is true that I had occasion to pass censure upon him when I was endeavouring to recall students from a depraved style, weakened by every kind of error, to a severer standard of taste. But at that time Seneca's works were in the hands of every young man, and my aim was not to ban his reading altogether, but to prevent his being preferred to authors superior to himself, but whom he was never tired of disparaging; for, being conscious of the fact that his own style was very different from theirs, he was afraid that he would fail to please those who admired them. But the young men loved rather than imitated him, and fell as far below him as he fell below the ancients. For I only wish they had equalled or at least approached his level. But he pleased them for his faults alone, and each individual sought to imitate such of those faults as lay within his capacity to reproduce: and then brought a reproach on his master by boasting that he spoke in the genuine Senecan manner. Seneca had many excellent qualities, a quick and fertile intelligence with great industry and wide knowledge, though as regards the last quality he was often led into error by those to whom he had entrusted the task of investigating certain

subjects on his behalf. He dealt with almost every department of knowledge; for speeches, poems, letters and dialogues all circulate under his name. In philosophy he showed a lack of critical power, but was none the less quite admirable in his denunciations of vice. His works contain a number of striking general reflexions and much that is worth reading for edification; but his style is for the most part corrupt and exceedingly dangerous, for the very reason that its vices are so many and attractive. One could wish that, while he relied on his own intelligence, he had allowed himself to be guided by the taste of others. For if he had only despised all unnatural expressions and had not been so passionately fond of all that was incorrect, if he had not felt such affection for all that was his own, and had not impaired the solidity of his matter by striving after epigrammatic brevity, he would have won the approval of the learned instead of the enthusiasm of boys. But even as it is, he deserves to be read by those whose powers have been formed and firmly moulded on the standards of a severer taste.

(*Inst. Or.* x. i. 125–31, tr. Butler.)

With Quintilian's criticism of Cicero may be compared another, found in the *Dialogus* of C. CORNELIUS TACITUS (A. D. *c.* 55–*c.* 117).[1] This is generally thought to be an early work of Tacitus, cast in a Ciceronian mould and differing so greatly in style from his other works as to have raised doubt whether he was really the author. Its main subject is the causes of the decline of oratory. Aper, who defends the 'modern' style, here asserts that the would-be old-fashioned orators of the day imitate Cicero's faults and mannerisms and ignore his real virtues.

I COME now to Cicero, who had the same battle to fight with his contemporaries that I have with you. While they admired the ancients, he gave the preference to the eloquence of his own day; and it is in taste more than anything else that he outdistances the orators of his period. Cicero was the first to give proper finish to oratorical style. He was the first to adopt

[1] See pp. 417 ff., 499 ff.

a method of selection in the use of words, and to cultivate artistic arrangement; further, he tried his hand at flowery passages, and was the author of some pointed sayings, at any rate in the speeches which he wrote when well on in years and towards the close of his career, that is to say, when his powers were well developed, and he had learned by experience and practice the qualities of the best type of oratory. As to his earlier speeches, they are not free from the old-fashioned blemishes. He is tedious in the introductions, long-winded in the narrative parts, and wearisome in his digressions. He is slow to rouse himself, and seldom warms to his work; only here and there do you find a sentence that has a rhythmical cadence and a flash-point at the finish. There is nothing you can extract, nothing you can take away with you: it is just as in rough-and-ready construction work, where the walls are strong, in all conscience, and lasting, but lacking in polish and lustre. My own view is that the orator, like a prosperous and well-found householder, ought to live in a house that is not only wind and weather proof, but pleasing also to the eye; he should not only have such furnishings as shall suffice for his essential needs, but also number among his belongings both gold and precious stones, so as to make people want to take him up again and again, and gaze with admiration. Some things there are again that must be carefully avoided, as antiquated and musty. There should be never a word of the rusty, mouldy tinge, never a sentence put together in the lame and listless style of the chroniclers. The orator ought to avoid discreditable and senseless buffoonery, vary his arrangement, and refrain from giving the self-same cadence to all his period-endings.

I don't want to make fun of Cicero's 'Wheel of Fortune', and his 'Boar's Sauce',[1] and the tag '*esse videatur*'[2], which he tacks on as a pointless finish for every second sentence throughout his speeches. It has gone against the grain to say what I have said,

[1] The words may equally mean 'Verrine justice'. A pun perpetrated by Cicero in his first speech against Verres.

[2] Cicero's favourite *clausula* or 'rhythmical clause-ending'.

and there is more that I have left out: though it is precisely these blemishes, and these alone, that are admired and imitated by those who call themselves orators of the good old school.

(*Dial.* 22–3, tr. Peterson.)

Messalla, the champion of the older school, fails to meet Aper's point that the ample Ciceronian style is unsuited to modern conditions. He has, however, some interesting remarks on the decline. He sees moral causes at its root, and mainly the changed character of education.

BUT nowadays our boys are escorted to the schools of the so-called 'professors of rhetoric',—persons who came on the scene just before the time of Cicero but failed to find favour with our forefathers, as is obvious from the fact that the censors Crassus and Domitius ordered them to shut down what Cicero calls their 'school of shamelessness'. They are escorted, as I was saying, to these schools, of which it would be hard to say what is most prejudicial to their intellectual growth, the place itself, or their fellow-scholars, or the studies they pursue. The place has nothing about it that commands respect—no one enters it who is not as ignorant as the rest; there is no profit in the society of the scholars, since they are equally devoid of any feeling of responsibility whether they take the floor or provide an audience; and the exercises in which they engage largely defeat their own objects. You are of course aware that there are two kinds of subject-matter handled by these professors, the deliberative and the disputatious.[1] Now while, as regards the former, it is entrusted to mere boys, as being obviously of less importance and not making such demands on the judgement, the more mature scholars are asked to deal with the latter—but, good heavens! what poor quality is shown in their themes, and how unnaturally they are made up! Then in addition to the subject-matter that is so remote from real life, there is the bombastic style in which it is presented. And so it comes that themes like these: 'the

[1] Cf. note on p. 257.

reward of the king-killer', or 'the outraged maid's alternatives', or 'a remedy for the plague', or 'the incestuous mother', and all the other topics that are treated every day in the school, but seldom or never in actual practice, are set forth in magniloquent phraseology; but when the speaker comes before a real tribunal[1]...

(*Dial.* 35, tr. Peterson.)

'No,' he continues, 'it may be said of eloquence as of a flame that it requires motion to excite it, fuel to feed it, and that it brightens as it burns.'[2] Great eloquence requires a great theme and the genius to deal with it.

Having sketched the conditions in which great oratory alone can flourish, Messalla is obliged to confess that they are not in themselves desirable. 'The benefit derived from the eloquence of the Gracchi did not make up for what the country suffered from their laws, and too dearly did Cicero pay by the death he died for his renown in oratory.' The fact was that 'the settled government of Augustus had caused a hush to fall upon eloquence as indeed it had upon the world at large'. A similar hush, we might add, to that which the Augustan age of poetry had imposed upon its successors.

The *Dialogus* will always be read, both for the brilliance of its argument and expression and for the instructive picture which it gives us of literary thought towards the end of the first century. It would be possible to amplify it from the Letters of Tacitus's friend, Pliny the Younger (C. PLINIUS CAECILIUS SECUNDUS, A.D. *c.* 61–*c.* 113[3]), who frequently refers to the manners and customs of the literary world of his day. But it is more interesting perhaps to quote some remarks of his on the subject of History. His opinion may be compared with those of Cicero and Quintilian already recorded.[4] Once more History must bow the knee before Oratory.

Pliny politely refuses a friend's request of him to write history. He admits an overwhelming desire for at least a modest share of fame, and regards History as a comparatively easy means of attaining it. He must, however, decline on other grounds.

[1] Here follows a gap in the MS., but it is quite clear how the sense must have proceeded.

[2] The impromptu version of the Latin by the younger Pitt.

[3] See pp. 341 ff.

[4] See p. 364 and p. 380.

ORATORY and Poetry meet small favour unless carried to the highest point of eloquence; but History, however executed, always pleases, for mankind are naturally inquisitive, and information, however baldly presented, has its charm for beings who adore even small talk and anecdote. But, besides this, I have an example in my own family that incites me to this pursuit, my uncle and adoptive father having been a historian, and that a very accurate one; and I read in the philosophers that 'tis a high virtue to tread in the steps of our ancestors, when they have gone before us in the right path.

Why then, you ask, do I yet delay? My reason is this: I have pleaded some very important causes, and (though I build but small hopes on them) I design to revise my speeches, lest for want of this last care all the pains they cost me should be thrown away, and they perish with their author; for as far as posterity is concerned, a work that has not received the last polish counts no more than if you had never begun it. You will tell me, perhaps, I might correct my speeches and write history at the same time. I wish I could; but they are both such great undertakings that to complete either of them would more than satisfy me. I was but nineteen when I first appeared at the bar; and yet it is only now at last I perceive (and that in truth but dimly) what is essential to a complete orator. How then shall I be able to support the weight of an additional burthen?

It is true, indeed, history and oratory have many common features, yet in these very apparent resemblances there are several contrasts. Both deal in narrative, but each after a different fashion. Oratory must concern itself as a rule with the low and vulgar facts of everyday life; History treats only of what is recondite, splendid, elevated; a dry, forcible, nervous style befits the one, but embellishments, and what one may call *top-knots*, the other. Oratory pleases most when it is vigorous, biting, and vehement; History, when it is diffusive, bland, and even dulcet. Lastly, diction, rhythm, and the structure of the periods, are distinctly different in these two arts. For there is all

the difference in the world, as Thucydides observes, between an *everlasting possession* [1] and a *prize composition which is heard and forgotten*; the first of which terms applies to History, the second to Oratory.

For these reasons I decline to intermingle two dissimilar pursuits, which are opposite just because they are both so highly important; lest, distraught by a sort of conflux, I should do in one case what is only proper to the other. Therefore (to keep to my professional language) I must beg leave the cause may be adjourned. (*Epp.* I. v. 8, tr. Melmoth, revised by Hutchison.)

To conclude this summary. Latin Criticism, like other departments of Latin literature, is faithful to the national temperament. Intellectually, the Roman lacked the quick, determined curiosity of the Greek. He had a natural aversion from discussion for its own sake. In morals, he preferred practice to speculation. Habitually obedient to authority, he was predisposed to accept rather than dispute. The defects of these qualities appear in Latin criticism. Its faculty is often more rigid than strong, precise than fine. It is not well adapted to a sensitive balance between the two extremes of crude vigour and elaborate finish. Its critical principles do not result from free reflexion and discerning generalization: they are stiffly pieced together in compilations, catalogues, and conventional epithets. The weakness of the Latin 'critical apparatus' is that it is too much an apparatus. Its failings imply its strength. It is sane and shrewd, clear and positive, pointed and compact upon a consistently ethical basis. The influence of Horace and Quintilian over a long posterity of critics and writers in many languages is testimony enough of its value to the world at large.

[1] Thucydides' claim for his own History (I. 22, cf. *The Pageant of Greece*, p. 201).

PART III. PROSE

HISTORY

THE earliest Roman histories, if we except the poetical annals of Naevius and Ennius, were written not in Latin but in Greek, sometimes by Romans, as, for instance, Quintus Fabius Pictor and Lucius Cincius Alimentus (*c.* 200 B. C.), sometimes by Greeks, as, for example, Polybius of Megalopolis, friend of the younger Scipio and historian of the Second Punic War. It is not until the time of the Gracchi (*c.* 120 B. C.) that we get Roman historians such as Lucius Cassius Hemina and Lucius Calpurnius Piso writing in Latin, and even they seem to have been little more than annalists ; ' arid and meagre ', says Cicero of the work of the latter. The first historical work of any importance (though but fragments of it have survived) is the *Origines* (Origins) of Marcus Porcius Cato. ' If I were allowed ', wrote the historian Niebuhr, ' to conjure back into existence one lost work of antiquity that work would be the Origines of Cato.' Yet even these seven books seem to have been so marred by want of order, discursiveness, and irrelevance as scarcely to merit the title of history.

Of all the Roman histories which have survived, the earliest, and in many ways the best, are those of Rome's greatest man, GAIUS JULIUS CAESAR (100–44 B. C.). Besides letters, speeches, poems, grammatical treatises, and political pamphlets (all of which have disappeared) Caesar wrote histories of the Gallic and Civil Wars. The former was composed in the year 51 B. C. and consists of seven books, a book for each year of the Gallic campaigns (58–52) ; an eighth book was afterwards added by some officer of Caesar's staff to cover the next two years and so to complete the war. Over and above its obvious historical purpose the Gallic War was no doubt intended by its author as an attempt to justify not only his strategy, which was unimpeachable, but his political and constitutional position, which was not. The three books of the Civil War were published after Caesar's death, and, though the subject-matter is of greater interest, it cannot be said that either from a historical or an artistic point of view this later work reaches the high level of the earlier. This may be due to the fact that a longer interval separated the events and their narration, but it is more probably

caused by faulty editing on the part of Caesar's literary executor. To the Civil War, which only covered the events of the years 49 and 48, were added by later hands the Alexandrian War, the African War, and the Spanish War, but none of these, with the possible exception of the first, bears much resemblance to Caesar's work, and quite certainly none of them were written by him.

Perhaps the first thing that strikes one about the historical style of Caesar is its detachment, and it is typical of him that he writes throughout in the third person ; there is, moreover, about it a lucidity and level-headedness which no selection of passages can satisfactorily illustrate and to which no excerpts can do justice. There are no purple patches, no heroics ; there is no straining after effect, no fine writing, no attempt at climax. Events are narrated simply and succinctly ' as they actually were '—and this, as Ranke said, is the historian's function at its highest. Somewhere in the *Civil War* Caesar writes : ' the lights of our camp drew night-fire from the enemy's archers ', and then adds, ' this caused our men to light fires in one place and encamp in another '. Could anything be terser ?

The winter of 54/53 B. C. was marked by a serious uprising of the Gauls. The Eburones first overwhelmed Caesar's general Sabinus near the modern town of Maastricht and then incited their neighbours, the Nervii, to rise against another of Caesar's officers, Quintus Cicero, brother of Marcus Tullius Cicero. The following passage relates the investment by the Nervii of Quintus Cicero near Brussels and his relief by Caesar from Amiens. Had Cicero suffered the fate of Sabinus (and he nearly did) Caesar's hopes in Gaul would have been at an end—but one does not hear much about the critical nature of the incident from the soldier-historian's quiet narrative.

As the defence every day became more difficult and hazardous, chiefly by the great multitude of killed and wounded, which considerably lessened the number of defendants, *Cicero* sent letter upon letter to inform *Cæsar* of his danger. Many of these couriers, falling into the enemy's hands, were tortured to death within view of our soldiers. There was at that time in the *Roman* camp a *Nervian* of distinction, by name *Vertico*, who in the beginning of the siege had fled to *Cicero*, and

given ample proofs of his fidelity. This man, by the hopes of liberty, and a promise of great rewards, engaged one of his slaves to carry a letter to *Cæsar*. Having concealed it in his javelin, and passed through the camp of the *Gauls* without suspicion, as being himself of that nation, he arrived safe at *Cæsar*'s quarters, who by this means was informed of the danger of *Cicero* and the legion.

Cæsar, receiving the letter about five in the afternoon, immediately dispatched a messenger to *M. Crassus*, who was quartered among the *Bellovaci*, twenty-five miles off, ordering him to draw out his legion at midnight, and march with all the expedition he could to join him. *Crassus*, according to his orders, came along with the courier. He sent likewise to *C. Fabius*, directing him to lead his legion into the country of the *Atrebatians*, which lay in the way to *Cicero*. He wrote to *Labienus*, if it could be done with safety, to meet him upon the frontiers of the *Nervians*. He himself in the mean-time assembled about four hundred horse from the nearest garrisons, resolving not to wait for the rest of the army, which lay at too great a distance.

At nine in the morning he had notice from his scouts of the arrival of *Crassus*. That day he marched twenty miles, leaving *Crassus* with a legion at *Samarobriva* [1], where he had deposited the baggage, hostages, publick papers and all the provisions which had been laid up for the winter. *Fabius*, in consequence of his instructions, having made all the haste he could, met him with his legion. *Labienus*, who had been informed of the death of *Sabinus*, and the destruction of the troops under his command, and who saw all the forces of *Treves* advancing against him; fearing lest, if he should quit his quarters, the enemy might construe it as a flight, and that it would be impossible for him to sustain their attack, especially as they were flushed with their late success; wrote to *Cæsar*, informing him of the danger that would attend the quiting his camp, of the disaster

[1] Amiens.

that happened among the *Eburones*, and that all the forces of the *Treviri*, both horse and foot, were encamped within three miles of him.

Cæsar approving his reasons; though he thereby found himself reduced from three to two legions, was yet sensible that all depended upon expedition. He makes forced marches; and reaching the territories of the *Nervians*, learns from some prisoners the state of the siege, and the danger the legion was in. Immediately he engages a *Gaulish* horseman, by the promise of great rewards, to carry a letter to *Cicero*. It was wrote in *Greek* characters, that if it fell into the enemy's hands, it might not be intelligible to them. The messenger had orders, in case he found it impracticable to penetrate himself into the *Roman* camp, to tie the letter to a javelin, and throw it in. In this letter *Cæsar* sent *Cicero* word that he was already on the march to relieve him, and would be up very soon; exhorting him in the mean-time, to defend himself with his wonted bravery. The *Gaul*, dreading a discovery, threw the letter into the camp as he had been ordered: but the javelin, by accident sticking in a tower, remained there two days unperceived. On the third a soldier saw it, took it down, and brought it to *Cicero*; who immediately read it in full assembly, and diffused the common joy through the whole camp. At the same time they perceived the smoke of the villages fired by *Cæsar* in his march, which put the arrival of the succours beyond all doubt.

(*De Bell. Gall.* v. 37–40, tr. W. Duncan.)

Caesar at the beginning of the Civil War (49 B. C.) marched straight for Spain. Massilia (Marseilles), at that time as much a Greek city as a Roman, in spite of professed neutrality, was really an ally of Caesar's rival, Pompey, and, not daring to leave so important an enemy town on his line of communications, Caesar instructed his officers, Trebonius and Decimus Brutus, to take it. The attacks on Marseilles and its subsequent blockade involved the sea fight of which so vivid a picture is given by Caesar. Domitius was the Pompeian general defending the city.

THE *Massilians*, after their late defeat, had drawn as many old ships out of the docks as they had lost in the engagement; and repaired and rigged them with wondrous expedition. They were likewise well provided with rowers and pilots; and had prepared a number of fishing-barks, which they filled with archers and engines, and strengthened with roofs, to shelter the rowers from the enemy's darts. The fleet being equipped in this manner; the *Massilians*, animated by the prayers and tears of their old men, matrons, and virgins, to exert themselves in defence of their country in so pressing a conjuncture; embarked with no less confidence and assurance, than they had done before their late defeat. For such is the weakness of the human mind, that things dark, hidden, and unknown, always produce in us a greater degree of confidence or terror; as happened in the present case: for the arrival of *Nasidius* had filled all men with an uncommon share of hope and eagerness. The wind springing up fair, they set sail, and rendezvoused at *Tauroenta*, a castle belonging to the town, where *Nasidius* lay with his fleet. Here they put their ships in order, armed themselves with courage for a second encounter, and entering readily into all the measures proposed by *Nasidius*, left to him the command of the left wing, and stationed themselves upon the right.

Brutus sailed to meet them with his fleet considerably increased; for besides the ships which *Cæsar* had caused to be built at *Arles*, he had also joined to it six more taken from the *Massilians*, which he had refitted and rigged since the late action. Wherefore exhorting his men to despise an enemy who had not been able to resist them when entire and unvanquished, he advanced against them full of resolution and confidence. It was easy to discern from *Trebonius*'s camp, and the eminences around it, what passed in the town. All the youth that were left, the old men, the women, children, and even the guards upon the walls, extending their hands to heaven, or repairing to the temples, and prostrating themselves at the

altars, besought the gods to grant them victory. Nor was there a man among them who did not believe, that their safety depended wholly on the issue of that day's action. For the choice of their youth, and the most considerable men of their city, were all on board the fleet: insomuch, that in case of any disaster they had no resource left: but should they obtain the victory, they were in hopes of preserving their city, either by their own forces, or the reinforcements they expected from without.

Accordingly in the engagement they behaved with the most determined courage. The remembrance of what their wives and children had represented to them at their departure served to exalt their bravery, in a full persuasion that this was the last opportunity they should have of exerting themselves in defence of their country; and that if they fell in the engagement, their fellow-citizens could not long survive them, as their fate must be the same upon the taking of the town. Our ships, being at some distance from each other, both gave the enemy's pilots an opportunity of shewing their address in working their vessels and flying to the assistance of their friends, when they were laid hold on by our grappling-hooks. And indeed, when it came to a close fight, they seconded the mountaineers with wonderful resolution, and in bravery seemed to yield but little to our men. At the same time, a great quantity of darts poured incessantly from their smaller frigates, wounded a great many of our rowers, and such of the soldiers as were without shelter. Two of their gallies fell upon that of *Brutus*, which was easily distinguished by its flag: but, though they attacked him on both sides, he extricated himself with such agility and address, as in a short time to get a little before; which made them run foul of each other so violently, that they were both considerably shattered; one in particular had its beak broken, and was in a manner totally crushed; which being observed by those of our fleet that lay nearest, they suddenly fell upon and sunk them, before they could recover out of their disorder.

In this encounter, the ships under *Nasidius* were of no manner of service to the *Massilians*, but quickly retired out of the fight. For as they were neither animated by the sight of their country, nor the intreaties of their relations, they were not very forward to expose their lives to hazard, but escaped without hurt from the combat. The *Massilians* had five ships sunk, and four taken. One escaped to the coast of Hither *Spain* with those of *Nasidius*. Of the rest that remained, one was immediately dispatched to *Marseilles*, to carry thither the news of the defeat. As soon as it drew near the town, all the inhabitants flocked out, to know what had passed; and being informed of it, appeared no less dejected than if the city had been taken by storm. However, they still continued their preparations for the defence of the place with as much diligence as ever.

(*De Bell. Civ.* ii. 4–7, tr. W. Duncan.)

Pompey's defeat by Caesar at the battle of Pharsalia (or Pharsalus), in Thessaly, in the spring of 48 B. C., may be regarded as the decisive engagement of the Civil War. It was followed by Pompey's flight to Egypt, where he was murdered. The following is an account of the battle. Compare its lucidity with the more 'showy' but far less intelligible battle-scenes in Livy.

BETWEEN the two armies there was an interval sufficient for the onset: but *Pompey* had given his troops orders to keep their ground, that *Cæsar*'s army might have all that way to come. This he is said to have done by the advice of *C. Triarius*, that the enemy's ranks might be broken, and themselves put out of breath, by having so far to run; of which disorder he hoped to make an advantage. He was besides of opinion, that our javelins would have less effect, by the troops continuing in their post, than if they sprung forward at the very time they were launched; and as the soldiers would have twice as far to run as usual, they must be weary and breathless by that time they came up with the first line. But herein *Pompey* seems to have acted without sufficient reason; because there is a certain alacrity and ardor of mind, naturally planted in

Pompey, from a denarius struck about 37 B. C. *by a supporter of his son Sextus Pompeius*

On the reverse a Roman Galley. The man who struck the coin, Q. Nasidius, was probably brother of L. Nasidius. Both obverse and reverse are enlarged

every man, which is inflamed by the desire of fighting; and which an able general, far from endeavouring to repress, will by all the methods he can devise, foment and cherish. Nor was it a vain institution of our ancestors, that the trumpets should sound on every side, and the whole army raise a shout, in order to animate the courage of their own men, and strike terror into the enemy. *Cæsar*'s soldiers entirely defeated *Pompey*'s hopes by their good discipline and experience. For, perceiving the enemy did not stir, they halted of their own accord in the midst of their career; and having taken a moment's breath, put themselves a second time in motion, marched up in good order, flung their javelins, and then betook themselves to their swords. Nor did *Pompey*'s men act with less presence of mind: for they sustained our attack, kept their ranks, bore the discharge of our darts; and having launched their own, immediately had recourse to their swords. At this instant *Pompey*'s horse, accompanied by the archers and slingers, attacked *Cæsar*'s; and having compelled them to give ground, began to extend themselves to the left, in order to flank the infantry. Whereupon *Cæsar* gave the appointed signal to the six cohorts, who fell on the enemy's horse with such fury, that they not only drove them from the field of battle, but even compelled them to seek refuge in the highest mountains. The archers and slingers, deprived of their protection, were soon after cut to pieces. Meanwhile the six cohorts, not content with this success, wheeled round upon the enemy's left wing, and began to charge it in the rear: whereupon *Cæsar*, perceiving the victory so far advanced, to complete it, brought up his third line, which till then had not engaged. *Pompey*'s infantry being thus doubly attacked in front by fresh troops, and in rear by the victorious cohorts, could no longer resist, but fled to their camp. Nor was *Cæsar* mistaken in his conjecture when, in exhorting his men, he declared that victory would depend chiefly on the six cohorts, which formed the body of reserve, and were stationed to oppose the enemy's horse: for by them were their cavalry

defeated, their archers and slingers cut to pieces, and their left wing surrounded and forced to fly.

Pompey seeing his cavalry routed, and that part of the army on which he chiefly depended put into disorder, despaired of being able to restore the battle, and quitted the field.

(*De Bell. Civ.* iii. 76–77, tr. W. Duncan.)

GAIUS SALLUSTIUS CRISPUS, the slightly younger contemporary of Caesar (86–34 B. C.), may fairly claim to be considered as the first consciously 'artistic' historian of Rome. He wrote, that is to say, not, like Caesar, as a politician or a general, but as a historian; he did not merely record events as they happened year by year, but, dropping the annalistic method, worked upon a definitely artistic scheme, introducing into his narrative speeches (the ancient historian's recognized method of criticizing historical events) after the manner of Thucydides upon whom he claimed to model his style. In politics Sallust was a democrat—hence his laudation of Caesar in the *Catiline* and of Marius in the *Jugurthine War*; he was a man of wealth and leisure who had held high office under Caesar and who had lived in personal contact with many of the men who figure in his books. Of his works we possess only the monograph on the Jugurthine War (111–105 B. C.), and that on the Catilinarian conspiracy of 63 B. C. What was perhaps his most important contribution to Roman history, five books of *Historiae* covering the dozen years 78–67, has unfortunately perished.

The Catilinarian conspiracy of 63 B. C. is still, in spite of Sallust's monograph and Cicero's four speeches (perhaps, in fact, *because of* the latter), shrouded in mystery. It is probably best regarded not as the work of the popular party taken as a whole (we cannot imagine Caesar implicated in so mad a scheme), but as the private attempt of Catiline, a dissolute but able patrician, defeated by Cicero that very year in the consular election—a man who, bankrupt as he was both in character and purse, rightly regarded revolution as his one chance.

Whatever its causes, the conspiracy was detected and crushed by the wisdom and promptness of Cicero. Catiline fled from Rome in November and in the following January was defeated and killed by Petreius near Pistoria. Catiline died better than he lived, and Sallust's account is not unworthy of his death.

PETREIUS posted the veteran cohorts, which he had raised on this occasion, in the front; and the rest of his army behind them, as a body of reserve. He himself rode from rank to rank, and addressing himself to his men by their names, intreated and conjured them 'to remember that they were now to engage against unarmed robbers in defence of their gods, their country, their children, and their property'. As he was an old soldier, having served in the army upwards of thirty years, as tribune, præfect, or prætor, and that with distinguished renown, he knew most of the soldiers and their gallant actions; and by calling these to remembrance he roused their courage.

Then, having taken all his measures with the utmost precaution, he sounded to battle, and ordered his cohorts to advance slowly: the enemy did the same. But when they were come near enough for the light-armed soldiers to begin the fight, they set up a mighty shout, rushed with great fury into a close engagement, and laying aside their darts, made use of their swords only. The veterans, mindful of their former bravery, pressed vigorously on the rebels, who made a bold resistance; so that the fight was maintained with great obstinacy. Catiline was all the while in the first line, at the head of a light-armed body; sustaining such as were severely pressed; putting fresh men in the room of those who were wounded; providing for every exigence; often charging the enemy in person; and performing at once the duty of a brave soldier and a great commander.

Petreius, when he found that Catiline, contrary to his expectations, exerted himself with great vigor, brought up the prætorian cohort against his main body, broke their ranks, and made great slaughter of them, as he did likewise of the others who maintained their ground elsewhere. Then he fell on both the wings at once. Manlius and the other officer from Fæsulæ were both killed, fighting in the foremost rank. Catiline, when he saw his forces routed, and himself left with a few only, mindful of his

birth and former dignity, rushed headlong into the thickest of the enemy, where he fell covered with wounds, and fighting to the last.

When the engagement was ended, it evidently appeared with what undaunted spirit and resolution Catiline's army was fired: for the body of every one was found on that very spot which, during the battle, he had occupied; those only excepted who were forced from their posts by the prætorian cohort; and even they, though they fell a little out of their ranks, were all wounded before. Catiline himself was found far from his own men, amidst the dead bodies of the enemy, breathing a little, with an air of that fierceness still in his face which he had when alive. Finally, in all his army there was not so much as one free citizen taken prisoner, either in the engagement or in the flight; for they spared their own lives as little as those of the enemy. The army of the republic obtained the victory indeed; but it was neither a cheap nor a joyful one; for their bravest men were either slain in battle or dangerously wounded. As there were many, too, who went to view the field, either out of curiosity or a desire of plunder, in turning over the dead bodies, some found a friend, some a relation, and some a guest; others there were likewise who discovered their enemies: so that through the whole army there appeared a mixture of gladness and sorrow, joy and mourning.

(*Catilina*, 62–4, tr. W. Rose.)

An incident in the Jugurthine War.

AT the time appointed, the party left the camp, having previously taken such measures as were necessary for the expedition. The centurions, according to the instructions which they had received from their guide, had changed their arms and dress, and marched with their head and feet bare, that they might have the freer prospect, and climb with more facility. Their swords and bucklers were slung across their shoulders; the latter of which were of the Numidian kind, and

covered with hides, as well for the sake of lightness as that all noise might be avoided, if they struck against the rock.

The Ligurian, leading the way, fixed cords about the stones, and such roots of trees as appeared proper for the purpose, to assist the soldiers in climbing; stretching his hand, from time to time, to such as were discouraged at so rugged a march. When the ascent was more steep than ordinary, he would send them up before him unarmed, and then follow himself with their arms. Wherever it appeared more dangerous to climb, he went foremost; and by ascending and descending several times, encouraged the rest to follow him, and retired to make way for them. At length, after much tedious labor, they gained the castle, which was quite naked on that side, the Numidians being all employed in the opposite quarter.

When Marius was informed of the success of the Ligurian, although he had kept the garrison employed the whole of the day by a continued attack, he now, encouraging the soldiers, sallied from under the moving galleries, and drawing up his men under cover of their shields,[1] rushed forward to the castle; while the slingers and archers poured their vollies from a distance, and the engines incessantly played on the besieged. The Numidians, who had often before broken to pieces and even burned the Roman galleries, did not now defend themselves within their battlements, but passed whole days and nights without their walls; reviling the efforts of the Romans; upbraiding Marius with madness; and, in the height of their exultation, threatening to make our men slaves of Jugurtha.

While both sides were warmly engaged in this vigorous struggle for glory and empire on the one hand, and life and liberty on the other, the trumpets on a sudden sounded in the enemy's rear. The women and children, who had come out to see the engagement, first fled in dismay; after them such as were nearest the walls; and at last the whole, armed and unarmed,

[1] *i.e.* each man with his shield held above his head, the shields being interlocked. This was known as the *testudo* or 'tortoise' formation.

fairly gave way. The Romans now pressed onward with greater vigor, overthrowing the enemy, and wounding most of them; then advancing over the heaps of slain, they flew to the walls, all thirsting for glory, and each striving to be foremost, without regard to plunder. Thus did accidental success justify the rashness of Marius, while his imprudence contributed to heighten his glory. (*Jugurtha*, 99, tr. W. Rose.)

The extant work of Caesar and Sallust comprises the stories of three wars and one political crisis; with Livy we get for the first time a complete history of Rome.

Of the life of TITUS LIVIUS we know very little. He was born at Patavium (the modern Padua) in 59 B. C., and according to the literary critics never quite lost, even on his removal to Rome, a trace of provincialism in his style. He was, besides being a historian, something of a philosopher, and indeed wrote philosophical dialogues after the manner of Plato. It says much for Livy as a man that in spite of a strong anti-Caesarian and pro-Pompeian bias, noticeable in that part of his history which concerned the Civil War, he won and retained the affectionate friendship of Augustus. He outlived that emperor by but three years, dying in A. D. 17.

The scope of Livy's historical work can be gathered from its title, 'Ab urbe condita libri', 'Books from the foundation of the city'. It began, that is, with the coming of Aeneas to the site of what was afterwards Rome, and ended with the death of Drusus in the year A. D. 9. The whole narrative occupied the astonishing number of 142 books, but of these only 35 survive—the first ten, taking us from Aeneas to the end of the Second Samnite War (293 B. C.), and Books 21–45 (the last five in an incomplete state), which comprise the period between the outbreak of the Second Punic War (218 B. C.) and the defeat of the Macedonian King Perseus by Lucius Aemilius Paulus at Pydna (168 B. C.). The vast remainder exists merely in fragments or epitomes or (a more important consideration) as re-presented, in a more or less assimilated form, in the pages of later historians.

Livy was essentially a historian with a purpose. That purpose was, as he tells us in his preface, to check the growing moral and political corruption of Rome by an appeal to Rome's citizens to mark her glorious past and keep before their minds the possibilities of her imperial future. 'To the following considerations',

he writes, 'I wish every one seriously and earnestly to apply his thoughts: by what kind of men and by what sort of conduct, in peace and war, the empire has been both acquired and extended; then, as discipline gradually declined, let him follow in his thoughts the structure of ancient morals, at first, as it were, leaning aside, then sinking farther and farther, then beginning to fall precipitate, until he arrives at the present times, when our vices have attained to such a height of enormity that we can endure neither the burden of them nor the sharpness of the remedies necessary to correct them.'[1]

Dante speaks of Livy as one who did not err[2]—but it must be admitted that he did from the point of view of the modern historian 'err' in three ways: his chronology is shaky, his battle-scenes (of which he is very fond) are neither convincing nor even always intelligible, and he was careless about his sources, always preferring a good story to the more bald and literal truth. But he had more than the qualities of this last defect, and in nothing is the literary skill of Livy more apparent than in his stories. The first ten books in particular are crowded with persons and scenes, half-mythical, half-historical—Horatius keeping the bridge, Manlius and sacred geese whose cackling saved the Capitol, Scaevola thrusting his right arm into the flame to illustrate to the Etruscans a Roman's indifference to pain—and all these stories are told with a mastery of phrase and a charm that, while it delights, makes one regret that the ancient world knew not the historical novel. Of all historical novelists Livy would perhaps have been the greatest.

Most of the translations which follow are by the Elizabethan scholar Philemon Holland. They are diffuse and not always accurate, but those two things must be forgiven for the beauty of their style.

This famous incident is attributed by historians to the year 362 B. C. Whether true or not—and its citation to explain the name Curtius lacus (Curtian lake) is suspicious—it makes an excellent story, and is told with Livy's usual vigour:

THE same yeare, by earthquake or some other forcible violence, the common place called Forum, clave and opened wide, welneere in the mids, and suncke downe to an exceeding depth: neither could that chincke or pit be filled

[1] G. Baker's translation of the Preface. [2] *Inferno*, xxviii. 12.

up, by casting in of earth (notwithstanding every man laboured and brought what he could) before that they began to enquire, according as they were admonished by the divine Oracles, what it might be, wherein the most puissance and greatnes of the people of Rome consisted. (For the wisards prophesied, That if they would have the state of Rome to remain sure for ever, they should dedicat and offer it, whatsoever it was, unto that place.) And when they were in doubt what this should be, it is reported, that *M. Curtius*, a right hardie knight and martiall yong gentleman, rebuked them therfore, because they doubted whether the Romanes had any earthly thing better than armour and valor? Herewith, after silence made, he lift up his eies, and beheld the temples of the immortall gods, scituate neere to the Forum, and the Capitoll likewise; and stretching forth his hands, one while toward heaven, another while to the gaping chinckes and gulfe in the earth, toward the infernall spirits beneath, hee offered and devoted himselfe to assured death. And mounting upon a brave courser, as richly trapped and set out, as possiblie he could devise, armed as he was at all peeces, he leapt horse and man and all into the hole.

(vii. 6, tr. Holland.)

Hannibal marching from Spain crossed the Alps in 218 B. C. Livy's account is picturesque and dramatic, but it is significant that Hannibal's exact route is still a matter of dispute.

THE next day, as the savages attacked with less vigour, the column closed up, and the pass was surmounted, not without loss, more, however, of baggage animals than of men. From that time the natives made their appearance in smaller numbers and behaved more like banditti than regular soldiers; they attacked either front or rear just as the ground gave them opportunity, or as the advance or halt of the column presented a chance of surprise. The elephants caused considerable delay, owing to the difficulty of getting them through narrow or precipitous places; on the other hand, they rendered that part of the column safe from attack where they were, for the natives

were unaccustomed to the sight of them and had a great dread of going too near them.

Nine days from their commencing the ascent they arrived at the highest point of the Alps, after traversing a region mostly without roads and frequently losing their way either through the treachery of their guides or through their own mistakes in trying to find the way for themselves. For two days they remained in camp on the summit, whilst the troops enjoyed a respite from fatigue and fighting. Some of the baggage animals which had fallen amongst the rocks and had afterwards followed the track of the column came into camp. To add to the misfortunes of the worn-out troops, there was a heavy fall of snow—the Pleiads were near their setting—and this new experience created considerable alarm.

In the early morning of the third day the army recommenced its heavy march over ground everywhere deep in snow. Hannibal saw in all faces an expression of listlessness and despondency. He rode on in front to a height from which there was a wide and extensive view, and halting his men, he pointed out to them the land of Italy and the rich valley of the Po lying at the foot of the Alps. 'You are now', he said,' crossing the barriers not only of Italy, but of Rome itself. Henceforth all will be smooth and easy for you; in one or, at the most, two battles, you will be masters of the capital and stronghold of Italy.'

Then the army resumed its advance with no annoyance from the enemy beyond occasional attempts at plunder. The remainder of the march, however, was attended with much greater difficulty than they had experienced in the ascent, for the distance to the plains on the Italian side is shorter, and therefore the descent is necessarily steeper. Almost the whole of the way was precipitous, narrow, and slippery, so that they were unable to keep their footing, and if they slipped they could not recover themselves; they kept falling over each other, and the baggage animals rolled over on their drivers.

At length they came to a much narrower pass which descended

over such sheer cliffs that a light-armed soldier could hardly get down it even by hanging on to projecting roots and branches. The place had always been precipitous, and a landslip had recently carried away the road for 1,000 feet. The cavalry came to a halt here as though they had arrived at their journey's end, and whilst Hannibal was wondering what could be causing the delay he was informed that there was no passage. Then he went forward to examine the place and saw that there was nothing for it but to lead the army by a long circuitous route over pathless and untrodden snow. But this, too, soon proved to be impracticable. The old snow had been covered to a moderate depth by a fresh fall, and the first comers planted their feet firmly on the new snow, but when it had become melted under the tread of so many men and beasts there was nothing to walk on but ice covered with slush. Their progress now became one incessant and miserable struggle. The smooth ice allowed no foothold, and as they were going down a steep incline they were still less able to keep on their legs, whilst, once down, they tried in vain to rise, as their hands and knees were continually slipping. There were no stumps or roots about for them to get hold of and support themselves by, so they rolled about helplessly on the glassy ice and slushy snow. The baggage animals as they toiled along cut through occasionally into the lowest layer of snow, and when they stumbled they struck out their hoofs in their struggles to recover themselves and broke through into the hard and congealed ice below, where most of them stuck as though caught in a gin.

At last, when men and beasts alike were worn out by their fruitless exertions, a camp was formed on the summit, after the place had been cleared with immense difficulty owing to the quantity of snow that had to be removed. The next thing was to level the rock through which alone a road was practicable. The soldiers were told off to cut through it. They built up against it an enormous pile of tall trees which they had felled and lopped, and when the wind was strong enough to blow up the fire they

set light to the pile. When the rock was red-hot they poured vinegar upon it to disintegrate it. After thus treating it by fire they opened a way through it with their tools, and eased the steep slope by winding tracks of moderate gradient, so that not only the baggage animals but even the elephants could be led down.

Four days were spent over the rock, and the animals were almost starved to death, for the heights are mostly bare of vegetation and what herbage there is is buried beneath the snow. In the lower levels there were sunny valleys and streams flowing through woods, and spots more deserving of human inhabitants. Here the beasts were turned loose to graze, and the troops, worn out with their engineering, were allowed to rest. In three days more they reached the open plains and found a pleasanter country and pleasanter people living in it.

(xxi. 35–7, tr. W. L. Roberts.)

During the Second Punic War Syracuse, which under Hiero had been Rome's faithful ally, declared, under Hippocrates and Epicydes, for Carthage. Marcus Marcellus laid siege to it in 214 B. C., but, thanks largely to Archimedes, did not take it till 212 B. C.

WHICH enterprise of theirs, so resolutely begun, and so hotely and forciblie followed, had sped well and taken effect, if one man at that time had not been in Syracusa. *Archimedes* was hee, a singular Astronomer. A rare man for contemplation & beholding the skie with the plannets, and other starres therein fixed : but a more wonderfull enginer, for devising and framing of artillerie, ordinance, fabrickes, and instruments of warre, whereby he would with very little ado and at ease, checke and frustrate all the inventions which the enemies with so great difficultie had prepared for to give the assault. This cunning artificer and admirable workeman had planted engines of all sorts upon the curtaine of the wall, which stood on certaine hils, and those not of even heigth : and having for the most part high places that yeelded hard accesse, and some other low

againe, whereunto men might come on even and plaine ground, hee fitted and furnished every place accordingly. Now *Marcellus* from out of his gallies of five ranckes of oares, assaulted the wall of Acradina, which (as is above said) is washed and dashed upon with the sea. And from the other gallies, the archers, slingers, yea and the light armed darters (called Velites) whose javelins are of that fashion, that they be unhandsome to be launced backe againe (by those that have not the cast and skil of it), so assailed the defendants, that they hardly suffered any one to stand upon the wals without hurt and danger. These, I say, kept their gallies far distant from the wall, because archers and darters had need of some space and compasse to launce and let drive their shot. But unto the gallies of five course of oares there were adjoined other two on either side: for which purpose the oares within were taken away, that they might close larbourd to starbourd, and so be coupled one unto the other. And thus being rowed as one entire gallie, by the helpe of the utmost oares outside, they carried upon them platformes of timber, framed with floures and lofts of plankes, and other engines and instruments within them to batter and shake the wals. Against this artillerie from the gallies, *Archimedes* bestowed and disposed upon the walls counter-engines of sundrie sizes, some greater, some smaller. Against those gallies that were furthest of, he weighed and discharged stones of exceeding maine weight, and those that were neerer, he annoied with lighter bullets, but those hee shot far thicker upon them. And last of all, to the end that his owne cittizens might, without taking harme, make a counter-batterie against the enemies, and so annoy them, he caused certaine barbacanes or loopeholes, almost a cubit deep, to be pierced through the wals, & to stand thick from the foot therof to the parapet; and all to flank the enemie, through which ouvertures they within shot closely against the enemies, some arrowes out of bowes, some quarrels out of scorpions and brakes, of meane and indifferent bignesse. And against those gallies, which approched more close and neer under the walls (because

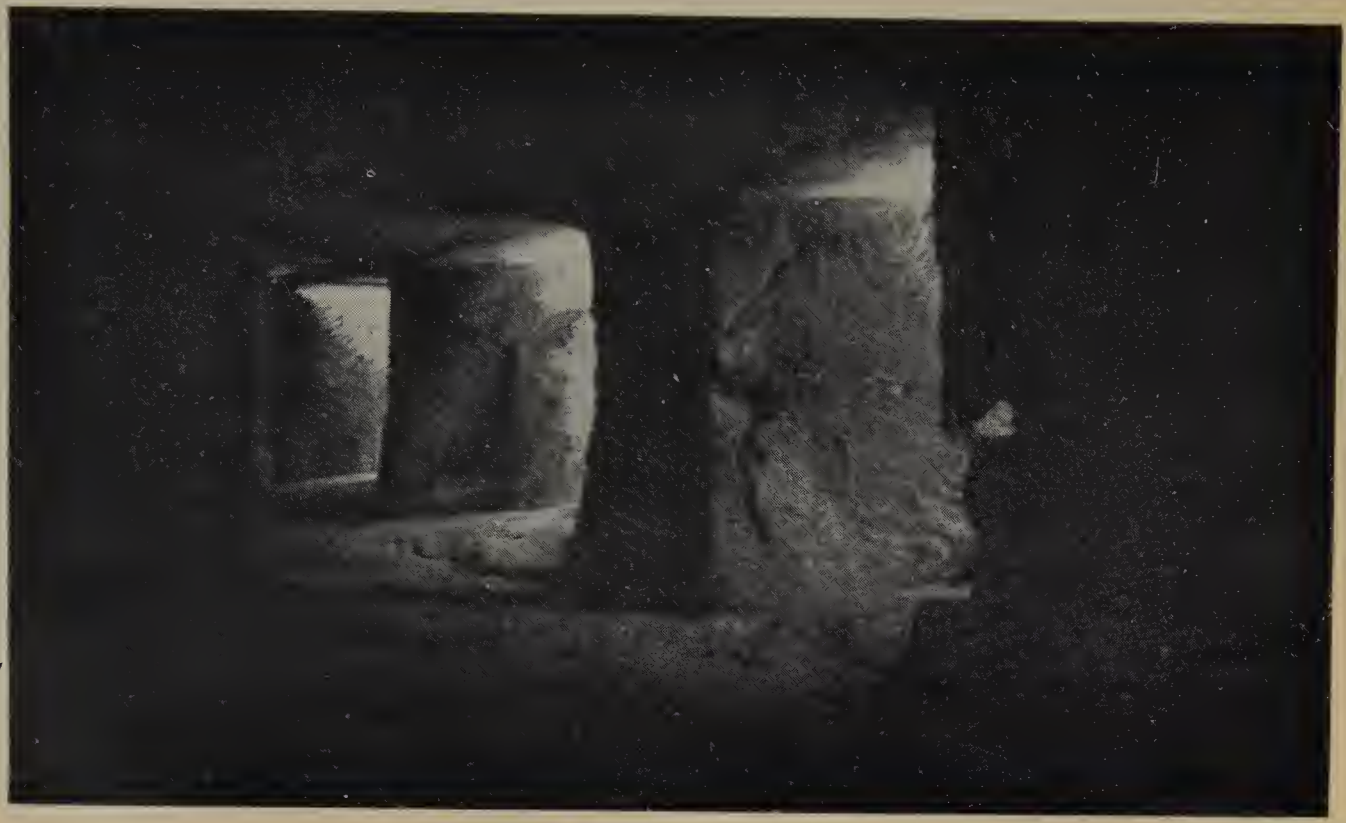
Syracuse Harbour

Photograph by Mr. R. Gardner

they would be within the shot, and that they within might carie and levell over them) he devised a crane or swipe to be planted aloft upon the wals, having at the one end, which hung over the sea, a drag or grappling hooke of yron like an hand, fastened thereto with a strong chaine: which tooke hold upon the proo of a gallie, and when the heavie counterpoise of lead at the other end, weighed it downe to the ground, and therewith drew with it the proo up on high, whiles it hung thus aloft in the aire, the gallie stood in a manner endlong upon the poupe. And then the swipe being let go again all at once sodainly with a sway, dashed the gallie, tumbling (as it were) downe from the top of the wall, with such a swinge and violence against the water (to the exceeding feare of the marriners) that if it had fallen directly downeright upon the keele, yet needs it must have received good store of water into it. Thus all their provision for assault by the sea side, was deluded and made void: and then they turned their whole forces from thence, to give assault by land. But even that part of the wall likewise was as wel furnished with all manner of engines & ordinance, provided at the great charge of *Hiero*, and by his careful forecast for many yeers together: but devised & framed by the artificiall cunning and skil only of *Archimedes*. Besides, the naturall situation of the ground was a great helpe: for that the rocke, upon which the foundations of the wall stand, is for the most part so steepe and bending forward, that not only the shot levelled out of any engine, but also whatsoever was but rolled & tumbled down, with the very own weight & poise, came with a great force and violence upon the enimie. Which foresaid cause made the assailants to have difficult climing up, and a unstedfast footing & keeping of their hold. Whereupon they went to counsell. And considering well, that all their attempts and enterprises were thus deluded & mocked by the enemie; it was thought good to give over assault, and only by long and continuall siege to cut them off from all victuals both by land and sea.

(xxiv. 34, tr. Holland.)

THE gate Hexapylos was broken downe somewhat before day, at which *Marcellus* with all his power entred the citie. He wakened them all, and set them to their businesse; he made them take weapon in hand, and to helpe (what they could) a citie in a manner wholly surprised and taken. *Epicides* made hast from the Island (which they themselves call Nasos) with a companie of souldiours about him, making full account to drive them out againe: as supposing that they were but some few, who through the negligence of the watchmen and warders were gotten over the wall: and ever as he met with any that were skared and in feare, hee said unto them eftsoones, that they themselves made more adoe, and every thing worse than there was cause, reporting all in greater measure and more fearfull manner than need was in very truth. But when he saw all places about Epipolæ full of armed men, after some small voley of shot, and little skirmish with the enemie, (whereby hee provoked them, rather than did any good else) hee turned backe againe with his companies, and retired into Acradina, not fearing so much the violence and multitude of the enemies, as least some intestine mischeefe by this occasion might arise, and that he should find in this tumult and hurliburly the gates of Acradina and the Island shut against him. *Marcellus*, being entered within the walls, tooke his prospect from the higher places, and when hee beheld under his eies the most goodly and beautifull citie of all others in those daies, (by report) he wept and shed teares abundantly, partly for joy that he had brought his purpose to so good a passe, and partly in compassion and remembrance of the auncient glorie and renowne of that citie. Hee called to mind the navies of the Atheniens by them sunke and drowned: hee thought upon the utter overthrow of two puissant armies, together with the losse of two most noble and famous captaines of theirs: moreover, there came into his memorie so many wars fought against the Carthaginians, with so great perill and hazard: so many and so mightie Tyrants and kings that raigned and kept their seat and roiall court there: & amongst the rest, he could



Subterranean defending passage under the fort Euryalus, Syracuse, built at the end of the fifth century just after the Athenian Expedition

Photograph by Mr. Percival Hart

not chuse but think of king *Hiero*, of fresh and famous memorie, a prince, who above all other gifts which his owne vertue and fortune had graced & endued him withall, was recommended especially for his many favors and good turnes done unto the people of Rome. When all these things presented themselves to his remembrance, with this cogitation besides, how all that beautie and glorie within one houres space was readie to burne on a light fire, and to be consumed into ashes: before that he advanced his ensignes against Acradina, hee sent before those Syracusians who had conversed (as is aforesaid) amongst the guards and garrison of the Romans, to persuade the enemies with mild & gentle speech, yet, to yeeld the citie.

(xxv. 24, tr. Holland.)

THE pillage of the citie was given to the souldiors: but there were appointed certaine warders over every house of theirs, who were among the garrisons of the Romanes, for to save the same. Amids many cruell, spightfull, and foule examples of anger, mallice, and covetousnesse, which happened to bee committed during the time of this saccage, it is reported, That in so great hurliburly as possiblie might bee, when a citie is newly taken, and hungrie souldiours runne to rifling, *Archimedes* was busily occupied, and studying upon certeine Geometricall figures that hee had drawne out in the dust, and happened to be slaine by a souldiour, that knew not who he was. Whereat *Marcellus* was much offended and displeased: and thereupon gave especiall order, that he should be honorably enterred: yea and caused his kinsfolkes to be sought out: and all they in remembrance of him, & for his name sake, were not onely saved, but also well accounted of, and had in good reputation. Thus you see in what sort, and by what meanes especially, Saracose was woon. A citie wherein was found such store of wealth and riches, as hardly would have bene gotten in Carthage, if it had bene forced then: notwithstanding it was able to hold out with Rome, and mainteine warre with equall force and power.

(xxv. 31, tr. Holland.)

An incident in the Third Macedonian War (171–167 B.C.).

THE elephants troubled the march as much in manner as the enemies could: for when they were come to a place where they could see no way, downe they cast their riders and governours, laying them along on the earth, and with the horrible braying that they made, affrighted their horses especially, untill such time as a devise was found for their passage. They began first to make the head or entrance of a bridge at the very brow and edge of a steepe downefall: this done, in the lower ground beneath, they set fast in the earth good strong and long posts of wood, two by two distant one from the other traverse-wise little more than the largenes of one of those beasts. Vpon which rested fast joined with tennon & morteise certain rafters like wal-plats 30 foot in length, and those being couched with planks crosse over in forme of a bridge, had earth and mould cast thereupon. A little way off beneath it, such another bridge was made; and so a third likewise, and many more consequently according as the craggie ground was broken and uneven. Now the Elephant from the firme ground entred upon the first bridge aforesaid; but before he was gone as farre as to the foot and end therof, the posts abovenamed were cut a two underneath; to the end that the bridge might fall, and in the easie reeling therof the beast also gently slide, as it were, and be carried therewith as farre as the head of a second bridge. Thus some of them glid and kept themselves standing upright on their feet, others rested upon their buttockes. Againe, when they were come to the plaine and levell floure of another such like bridge, by the fall of it in manner aforesaid they were driven unto a third bridge beneath it, untill such time as they were come to a more plaine and even valley.

(xliv. 5, tr. Holland.)

One of the earliest writers to extract metal from the rich historical mine of Livy was GAIUS VELLEIUS PATERCULUS[1], who, in the year A.D. 29, wrote an abridged history of Rome in two books, partly to employ his leisure and partly with the purpose

[1] See pp. 373 f.

of dedicating the work to his friend and fellow soldier Marcus Vinicius, who was to assume the consulship in the following year. Velleius—we do not know the exact date of his birth, but it must have been about 20 B.C.—was before everything else a soldier as his father and grandfather had been before him. Viewed as an historian he may be, and not infrequently has been, called a dilettante, but he was for all that a well-read man whose interests were not bounded by Rome (as witness the chapters on eastern nations in his first book), and a travelled one; for he had accompanied Augustus's adoptive son, Gaius, on his journey to Parthia in A.D. 1 and had served under Tiberius in both the German and Pannonian wars of a few years later. We have no trace of him after the publication of his History in A.D. 30. As an historian his main virtue lies in his power of making the *persons* of his history stand out, his main defects (over and above a naïve tendency to introduce himself, his family, and his ancestors into his pages wherever possible) are carelessness, a preference for anecdote to historically important fact—or perhaps an inability to distinguish between the two—and, towards the end of the history, a blind adulation of the Emperor Tiberius which is certainly as far off the mark, but probably no further, as the venom of Tacitus with which it is interesting to compare it. 'Vile flatterer!' writes Macaulay in one of his marginal notes. 'Yet after all he could hardly help it. But how the strong, acute, cynical mind of Tiberius must have been revolted by adulation, the absence of which he would probably have punished! Velleius Paterculus seems to me a particularly good epitomist.' 'His style', says Professor Mackail, 'alternates between a sort of laboured sprightliness and a careless conversational manner'; and Macaulay in the same note observes 'an immense quantity of rant'. It would be unjust to accuse the following passage, even the moralizing at the end, of such a defect:

CÆSAR, now victorious over all his Enemies, return'd to the City, and with an unexampled Strain of Clemency, gave a general Indemnity to all who had been in Arms against him. He entertained the People with publick Feasting for several Days, and exhibited magnificent Shews of the Combating of *Gladiators*, of *Sea-Fights*, and mock Battles, not only of Horse and Foot, but likewise of Elephants. He triumphed

five Times. The Images and Decorations of his *Gallick* Triumph were of *Citron Wood*, and those of his *Pontick*, of *Acacia*: He made Use of *Tortoise* Shell in his *Alexandrian* Triumph, of *Ivory* in his *African*, and of polished *Silver* in his Triumph over *Spain*. The Money raised out of the Spoils was above six hundred Millions of *Sesterces*. But this great Man, who had so mildly used all his Victories, was not allowed a quiet Enjoyment of the Sovereignty more than five Months. For he returned to the City in *October*, and was murdered on the *Ides* of *March* next after, by a Band of Conspirators, of whom *Brutus* and *Cassius* were the Leaders. One of these he had not obliged, by promising him the *Consulship*, as he had highly offended the other by delaying his Advancement to that Office. Besides them, there were several more of *Cæsar's* most intimate Friends in the Design, who, by the Success of that Cause, had been promoted to the highest Dignities. Such were *Dec. Brutus*, *C. Trebonius*, and others of Note and Distinction in the State. Now *M. Antony*, *Cæsar's* Colleague in the *Consulship*, one who was fit for any desperate Attempt, had greatly contributed to irreconcile the *Senate* to him. This he did, by presenting him with a Regal Diadem, as he was sitting in the *Rostrum*, to see the Ceremonies of the *Lupercalia*. *Cæsar* indeed rejected it, but with an Air however, that signified very little Dissatisfaction.

Hirtius and *Pansa* had constantly advised *Cæsar*, *As he had acquired, so likewise to maintain the Monarchy by his Sword*. This was now found by woful Experience to have been good Counsel. But he still declaring, *That he would rather be dead than dreaded*: And hoping to meet with the same Clemency from others, that he himself had display'd in so extraordinary a Manner towards all, fell, ere he was aware, into the Murderous Hands of a Knot of ungrateful Men. Many Prodigies and Presages forewarn'd him of the impending Danger. The *Sooth-sayers* caution'd him to beware of the *Ides* of *March*. His Wife *Calpurnia*, frighted by a Dream, conjur'd him to stay at Home that Day; and a little Schedule containing a Discovery of the Plot, was put into his

Hands, but the perusal of it was unfortunately delayed. Thus we learn how irresistible the Power of Fate is, and how far the Gods may blind and infatuate the Minds of those they have marked out for Destruction.

(*Hist.* ii. 56, 57, tr. J. Paterson.)

It is a curious fact that we are least well informed as to the details of the life of Rome's greatest historian. We know neither the year in which CORNELIUS TACITUS[1] was born, nor that in which he died, nor even his 'Christian' name. He was Consul in the second year of Nerva's reign (A. D. 97) and, as we chance to gather from an inscription, governor of the province of Asia under Nerva's successor Trajan. He presumably died about the year 118. Tacitus must have been in his prime during the reign of Domitian (A. D. 81–96), but he knew better than to try and write history under an emperor from whose spiteful temper neither author nor book betraying republican sentiments would be safe. The only work, therefore, which can be attributed to these fifteen years is a *Dialogue upon Oratory*. Two years after the tyrant's death, however, Tacitus published two historical, or quasi-historical, works: one was a life of his father-in-law Agricola, the famous governor of Britain, and the other an ethnographical monograph, the *Germania*, in which he gives a detailed account of the tribes of Germany, their position, origin, climate, manners, and so forth.

These, however, were but a prelude to his great historical works, the *Histories*, which covered the period from the accession of Galba to the death of Domitian (A. D. 69–96), and the still later composed *Annals*, which, extending as they did from Augustus to the death of Nero (A. D. 68), formed a history of the Julio-Claudian dynasty.

Here are, to begin with, Tacitus's own views on the historian and his office. It is interesting to compare these passages with Livy's introduction.[2]

I AM well aware that much of what I have related, and still have to relate, may seem of little moment, and too trifling to be recorded. But none can compare my subject with that of those who wrote the early history of Rome. They had great wars to describe, the storming of cities, the rout and capture

[1] See pp. 384 ff., 499 ff. [2] See p. 404.

of kings ; or if they turned to affairs at home, they could enlarge freely on the conflicts of Consuls with Tribunes, on land laws and corn laws, on struggles between patricians and plebeians. My theme is narrow and inglorious : a peace unbroken, or disturbed only by petty wars ; a distressful course of events in Rome ; a prince with no interest in the expansion of the Empire. It may serve some good purpose, nevertheless, to look closely into these things, at first sight so unimportant ; since it is often from such beginnings that mighty movements take their rise.

For every country and city must be ruled either by the populace, or by the few, or by one man ; a form of government selected and compounded out of these elements, may be commended more easily than brought into being ; nor could it endure were it set up. And just as in former times, when the people held all power, men had to study the temper of the multitude, and learn how to control and guide it : or again, when the patricians were all-powerful, those who had learnt best to understand the mind of the Senate and of the aristocracy were deemed wise men, and cunning in the times : so now, when things are changed, and Rome is, in fact, under the rule of a single man, it may prove useful to enquire into and record such things as I have to tell. For but few have wisdom enough of their own to distinguish what is honourable from what is base, the expedient from the hurtful ; most men have to learn these things from the experience of others. And yet such enquiries, however profitable they may be, afford but little entertainment. Descriptions of new countries : the varied incidents of battle : the deaths of famous leaders : these are topics which interest and refresh the reader's mind. My task is to record a succession of cruel edicts, of prosecutions heaped on prosecutions ; to tell of friends betrayed, or innocent men brought to ruin, of trials all ending in one way, with a uniformity as monotonous as it is revolting.

(*Ann.* iv. 32–3, tr. G. G. Ramsay.)

IF I were telling of foreign wars, and of men dying for their country in ways thus like each other, I should even so be surfeited, and expect my readers to feel weariness and disgust at this long sad tale of citizens coming, however nobly, to their end ; but the story of all this servile endurance, all this blood wasted wantonly at home, wears out the mind and wrings the soul with melancholy. Nor can I ask my readers to accept any other plea than this—that I cannot blame the men who perished thus ingloriously. For these things came of the wrath of the Gods against Rome—a wrath that may not be passed over, as when armies are routed or cities captured, with a single mention. Let this tribute at least be paid to these illustrious men in the after time : that as in their burial they were divided from the common herd, so in the record of their end they may receive an abiding monument of their own.

(*Ann.* xvi. 16, tr. G. G. Ramsay.)

The peroration to the life of Agricola.

THOU wast indeed fortunate, Agricola, not only in the splendour of thy life, but in the opportune moment of thy death. Thou submittedst to thy fate, so they tell us who were present to hear thy last words, with courage and cheerfulness, seeming to be doing all thou couldst to give thine Emperor full acquittal. As for me and thy daughter, besides all the bitterness of a father's loss, it increases our sorrow that it was not permitted us to watch over thy failing health, to comfort thy weakness, to satisfy ourselves with those looks, those embraces. Assuredly we should have received some precepts, some utterances to fix in our inmost hearts. This is the bitterness of our sorrow, this the smart of our wound, that from the circumstance of so long an absence thou wast lost to us four years before. Doubtless, best of fathers, with that most loving wife at thy side, all the dues of affection were abundantly paid thee, yet with too few tears thou wast laid to thy rest, and in the light of thy last day there was something for which thine eyes longed in vain.

If there is any dwelling-place for the spirits of the just; if, as the wise believe, noble souls do not perish with the body, rest thou in peace; and call us, thy family, from weak regrets and womanish laments to the contemplation of thy virtues, for which we must not weep nor beat the breast. Let us honour thee not so much with transitory praises as with our reverence, and, if our powers permit us, with our emulation. That will be true respect, that the true affection of thy nearest kin. This, too, is what I would enjoin on daughter and wife, to honour the memory of that father, that husband, by pondering in their hearts all his words and acts, by cherishing the features and lineaments of his character rather than those of his person. It is not that I would forbid the likenesses which are wrought in marble or in bronze; but as the faces of men, so all similitudes of the face are weak and perishable things, while the fashion of the soul is everlasting, such as may be expressed not in some foreign substance, or by the help of art, but in our own lives. Whatever we loved, whatever we admired in Agricola, survives, and will survive in the hearts of men, in the succession of the ages, in the fame that waits on noble deeds. Over many indeed, of those who have gone before, as over the inglorious and ignoble, the waves of oblivion will roll; Agricola, made known to posterity by history and tradition, will live for ever.

(*Agr.* 45, 46, tr. Church and Brodribb.)

The German tribes of the far north. The Suiones are certainly, from the form of their name, the Swedes, but the meaning of the 'other sea' which Tacitus distinguishes from 'the Ocean' is not clear.

BEYOND the Suiones is another sea, sluggish and almost motionless, which, we may certainly infer, girdles and surrounds the world, from the fact that the last radiance of the setting sun lingers on till sunrise, with a brightness sufficient to dim the light of the stars. Even the very sound of his rising, as popular belief adds, may be heard, and the forms of gods and the glory round his head may be seen. Only thus far (and here rumour seems truth) does the world extend.

At this point the Suevic sea, on its eastern shore, washes the tribes of the Æstii, whose rites and fashions and style of dress are those of the Suevi, while their language is more like the British. They worship the mother of the gods, and wear as a religious symbol the device of a wild boar. This serves as armour, and as a universal defence, rendering the votary of the goddess safe even amidst enemies. They often use clubs, iron weapons but seldom. They are more patient in cultivating corn and other produce than might be expected from the general indolence of the Germans. But they also search the deep, and are the only people who gather amber (which they call 'glesum'), in the shallows, and also on the shore itself. Barbarians as they are they have not investigated or discovered what natural cause or process produces it. Nay, it even lay amid the sea's other refuse, till our luxury gave it a name. To them it is utterly useless; they gather it in its raw state, bring it to us in shapeless lumps, and marvel at the price which they receive. It is however a juice from trees, as you may infer from the fact that there are often seen shining through it reptiles, and even winged insects, which, having become entangled in the fluid, are gradually enclosed in the substance as it hardens. I am therefore inclined to think that the islands and countries of the West, like the remote recesses of the East, where frankincense and balsam exude, contain fruitful woods and groves; that these productions, acted on by the near rays of the sun, glide in a liquid state into the adjacent sea, and are thrown up by the force of storms on the opposite shores. If you test the composition of amber by applying fire, it burns like pinewood, and sends forth a rich and fragrant flame; it is soon softened into something like pitch or resin.

Closely bordering on the Suiones are the tribes of the Sitones, which, resembling them in all else, differ only in being ruled by a woman. So low have they fallen, not merely from freedom, but even from slavery itself. Here Suevia ends.

(*Germ.* 45, tr. Church and Brodribb.)

The year A.D. 69 was perhaps the most eventful year of the first century. In the winter of the year before, Nero, hearing of the simultaneous revolts of Galba in Spain and Vindex in Gaul, committed suicide. Vindex had already been defeated and killed by Virginius Rufus, the loyal governor of Upper Germany, and Galba was left to march at the head of his troops unopposed into Italy. 'The secret of empire', as Tacitus said, 'had been revealed, that an emperor could be created elsewhere than at Rome.' But if one emperor could, so could another. On January 1, 69, the legions of Germany refused the customary oath of allegiance to Galba and saluted as emperor Aulus Vitellius, governor of the lower province. Vitellius was an old, feeble, and gluttonous man, and Galba might easily have held his own against him had he not made the fatal mistake of adopting and making 'Caesar' (i.e. heir apparent) a certain Piso, thus excluding from all hopes of succession and even power Otho, the governor of Lusitania (Portugal), who had been his staunchest supporter and had actually marched with him to Rome. Angered by this act Otho deserted Galba and won over to himself the all-powerful Praetorian Guard who on January 15 deposed the emperor, murdered both him and Piso, and bestowed the purple on their new idol. But Otho did not enjoy his elevation for long. Marching north to arrest the advance of Vitellius's forces into Italy, he was defeated at the battle of Bedriacum, just north of the Po. The extract below tells of his consequent suicide.

AFTER some such speech as this he urged them courteously to hurry away and not to exasperate the victor by their hesitation. To each man's age and position he paid due regard, using his authority with the young and persuasion with his elders, while his quiet looks and firm speech helped to control their ill-timed tears. He gave orders for boats and carriages to be provided for their departure. All petitions and letters containing any compliments to himself, or marked insults to Vitellius, he destroyed, and distributed his money carefully, not like a man at the point of death. He then actually tried to comfort the sorrowful fears of his nephew, Salvius Cocceianus, by praising his attachment and chiding his alarm. 'Do you imagine', he said, 'that Vitellius will be so hard-hearted as not

to show me some gratitude for saving his whole household? By promptly putting an end to myself I deserve to earn some mercy for my family. For it is not in blank despair, but with my army clamouring for battle, that I determine to save my country from the last calamities. I have won enough fame for myself and ennoblement for my posterity; for, after the line of the Julians, Claudians, Servians, I have been the first to bring the principate into a new family. So rouse yourself and go on with your life. Never forget that Otho was your uncle, yet keep your remembrance within bounds.'

After this he made them all retire and rested for a while. But his last reflexions were interrupted by a sudden disturbance and the news of a mutinous outbreak among the troops. They were threatening to kill all those who were leaving, and turned with especial violence against Verginius, whose house was in a state of siege. Otho rebuked the ringleaders and returned, consenting to receive the adieux of those who were going, until it was time for them to depart in safety. As the day deepened into evening he quenched his thirst with a drink of iced water. Two daggers were brought to him and, after trying them both, he put one under his pillow. Being assured on inquiry that his friends had started, he spent a peaceful night, not, it is said, without sleep. At break of day he fell upon his dagger. Hearing his dying groan, his slaves and freedmen entered with Plotius Firmus, the Prefect of the Guards, and found a single wound in his breast. The funeral was hurried forward out of respect for his own earnest entreaties, for he had been afraid his head might be cut off and subjected to outrage. The Guard carried the body, sounding his praises with tears in their eyes, and covering his hands and wounded breast with kisses. Some of the soldiers killed themselves beside the pyre, not because they had harmed Vitellius or feared reprisals, but from love of their emperor, and to follow his noble example. Similar suicides became common afterwards at Bedriacum and Placentia, and in other encampments. An inconspicuous tomb was built for Otho, as being less

likely to be disturbed : and thus he ended his life in his thirty-seventh year.

(*Hist.* ii. 48–9, tr. W. H. Fyfe.)

In the year A.D. 9 there had been a rising of the German tribes in the North-West, and Varus and three legions had perished. The *Clades Variana*, as it was called, was perhaps the most severe defeat ever suffered by the Roman arms. Augustus at the news, so Suetonius tells us, ' for several months in succession cut neither his beard nor his hair, and sometimes would dash his head against a door, crying : " Varus, give me back my legions ! " ' The legions were the 17th, 18th, and 19th, and these numbers were never used again in the Roman Army list.

The following incident occurred in A.D. 15 when Germanicus, brother of the future Emperor Claudius, and grandson of Livia, Augustus's second wife, was in supreme command in Germany.

AS the army was now not far from the Teutoburgian Forest, in which the remains of Varus and his legions were said to be lying still unburied, a desire sprang up in the mind of Germanicus to pay the last rites to that General and his soldiers ; and the whole army was moved to pity at the thought of fallen friends and kinsmen, of the calamities of war, and the chances of human life. Caecina was sent on to reconnoitre the recesses of the forest, and to lay down bridges and causeways over swampy or treacherous ground.

The army then advanced to the sad spot, so full of ghastly sights and memories. Here was the place where Varus first pitched his camp, with its wide circuit, and its head-quarters marked out, shewing that three legions had been at work ; further on, the half-completed rampart, the shallow ditch, indicated where the crippled remnant had made a stand. In the middle of the plain lay the whitening bones, scattered about, or in heaps, just as the men had fallen : some running away, some still holding their ground. Fragments of weapons, and limbs of horses, were lying about ; human heads also, stuck on to trunks of trees. In groves close by were the barbarian altars on which the Tribunes and centurions of the first rank had

The German danger in the North. On the left is a coin of the reign of Augustus, stamped VAR *for Varus, the commander whose legions were annihilated in Germany; on the right, the back and front of a coin commemorating a triumph over the Germans and the recovery of the standards of Varus under Germanicus*

A German in Claudius's Squadron

From a tomb

been butchered. And survivors of the disaster, who had escaped from the battlefield or from captivity, told how the Legates had fallen here, how the eagles had been captured there; showed the spot where Varus had received his first wound, and where the unhappy man, with his own hand, had dealt himself the fatal blow; pointed out the mound from which Arminius[1] had harangued; told how many gibbets were set up, what trenches dug for the captured: and with what contumely Arminius had treated the standards and the eagles.

And so, six years after the event, the whole of the Roman army there present proceeded in sorrow and in anger, and with an indignation rising higher and higher against the enemy, to bury the bones of the three legions. None could tell whether he were laying the remains of friend or stranger in the earth; all alike were treated as kinsfolk and of the same blood. Germanicus himself, as a grateful office to the dead, and as sharer in the present sorrow, laid the first sod of the mound. But this act displeased Tiberius; whether because he took everything that Germanicus did in evil part, or because he thought that the sight of their slain and unburied comrades would unnerve the soldiers for battle, and increase their terror of the enemy: perhaps, also, he thought that an Imperator who held the Augurship and other ancient priesthoods should not have handled things pertaining to the dead.

(*Ann.* i. 61–2, tr. G. G. Ramsay.)

After successful campaigns against the Germans Germanicus was in the year A.D. 17 sent by Tiberius to settle the East. Here he found himself constantly thwarted by Piso, the governor of Syria; so much so that his death in A.D. 19 was popularly attributed to the machinations of Piso and his wife Plancina.

FOR a moment Germanicus rallied, and hope revived; but his strength again failed, and as his end drew nigh he thus addressed the friends who stood beside him:—

If I were paying my debt to Nature, I might deem that I had

[1] Arminius was the German prince responsible for the Varian disaster.

a grievance even against the Gods for snatching me thus, so young, and before my time, from my parents, my children and my country; but now that my days have been cut short by the guilty hands of Piso and Plancina, I leave my last prayers with you. Tell my father and my brother what cruel wrongs I have endured, by what artifices I have been beset: how I have ended a miserable life by a most unhappy death. Those who have shared my hopes—those who are near to me in blood—nay, even those who have envied me in life—will weep that one who had known such high fortunes, and had come safe through so many wars, should have perished by the treachery of a woman. It will be for you to lay complaint before the Senate, and invoke the law: for it is the first duty of a friend, not to follow the dead with idle lamentations to the grave, but to remember what he desired, to execute what he enjoined. Men who knew not Germanicus will lament him; but if it was himself, rather than his fortunes, that you loved, you will avenge him. Shew to the people of Rome my wife, grand-daughter of the Divine Augustus; count over to them our six children. Men's pity will be with the accusers; and, if the accused plead that they were bidden to do the foul deed, none will believe, or, if they believe, forgive.

The friends swore, as they touched the dying man's right hand, that they would give up life sooner than revenge.

Germanicus then turned to his wife. He implored her by the love she bore him, and for their children's sake, to tame her high spirit, to bow beneath the stroke of fortune, and when she returned to Rome, not to anger those more powerful than herself by entering into rivalry with them. This he said openly; he kept more for her private ear, bidding her beware, it was supposed, of Tiberius. Soon after that, he breathed his last, amid the profound sorrow of the Province and the surrounding peoples. Foreign nations also, and their kings, bewailed him; so genial was he to friends, so courteous to foes. His looks and his speech alike commanded respect; his manners had no arrogance, and provoked no ill-will; yet they had all the dignity and distinction which befitted his high estate.

(*Ann.* ii. 71–2, tr. G. G. Ramsay.)

Agrippina, wife of Germanicus, starts for Rome carrying with her the ashes of her dead husband.

MEANWHILE Agrippina, continuing her voyage over the winter seas without a break, arrived at Corcyra,[1] an island which lies over against the coast of Calabria. Overwhelmed by a tempestuous grief which she knew not how to bear, she tarried there a few days to compose her spirits. During this interval, at the news of her approach, there was a rush of her intimate friends to Brundisium,[2] which was the nearest and safest port at which to land. Among the number were many officers who had served in various positions under Germanicus ; many even who had never known him flocked in from the neighbouring towns, some as a matter of duty to the Emperor, some merely doing as others did.

When the fleet was first sighted in the offing, not only the harbour and the adjoining parts of the beach, but also the city walls, the housetops, and every point which commanded a distant view out to sea, were thronged with a sorrowing crowd, each man asking his neighbour whether they should receive Agrippina in silence when she landed, or with speech of some sort. Before they could agree what best befitted the occasion, the fleet came slowly in. There was none of the usual alertness in the rowing ; everything was arranged to betoken sorrow. And when Agrippina, with her two children,[3] stepped off the ship, carrying the funeral urn in her hands, and with her eyes fixed upon the ground, one cry of grief burst from the entire multitude, kinsfolk and strangers, men and women, all lamenting alike, save that the grief of Agrippina's attendants was worn out by long continuance, while that of those who had come to meet her was the more fresh and strong.

The Emperor had sent an escort of two Praetorian Cohorts, and had ordered the magistrates of Calabria, Apulia and Campania to pay the last offices of respect to the memory of his son.

[1] The modern Corfu. [2] The modern Brindisi.
[3] One of them was the future Emperor Caligula.

And so the ashes were carried on the shoulders of Tribunes and centurions; in front went the standards, undecorated, and the fasces reversed; when they passed through a Colony, the populace were clothed in black, while the knights in their robes of state burned garments and spices and other funeral oblations, in proportion to the wealth of the community. Even from cities far off the line of the procession people came out to meet it, offering victims, setting up altars to the Manes of the deceased, and testifying their grief by tears and wailings for the dead.

(*Ann.* iii. 1–2, tr. G. G. Ramsay.)

The emperor Tiberius died in A.D. 37. It is difficult to estimate his character correctly, though we may be sure that both Tacitus and Suetonius give us a very much over-coloured picture of his vices and cruelty. But, whatever may be thought about its truth, we cannot but admire the brilliance of this character-sketch.

AND now Tiberius was failing in health and strength, in everything but dissimulation. There remained the same unbending will, the same intentness of look and speech; but he would affect sometimes an air of gaiety to conceal his manifest decline. After changing more than once his place of abode, he settled down at last in a villa which had belonged to Lucius Lucullus, on the promontory of Misenum.[1] That his end was drawing near was discovered in the following manner. There was an eminent physician called Charicles, who used to give Tiberius the benefit of his advice, though he was not his regular attendant. On taking his leave, as if for business of his own, Charicles took the Emperor's hand by way of respect: in doing so, he touched his pulse. The action did not escape Tiberius. Offended, perhaps, and therefore all the more resolute to conceal his annoyance, he ordered fresh viands to be brought in, and then sat at table longer than was his wont, as though out of compliment to his departing friend. Charicles assured Macro[2]

[1] His villa at the western end of the bay of Naples.
[2] An officer of high command in the palace.

Head of Tiberius

Wilton House

that life was ebbing away, and that Tiberius could not hold out for more than two days.

Hurried conferences were held on the spot; despatches were sent off to the Legates, and manifestoes to the armies. On the 16th of March the breathing failed; and it was thought that the end had come. Gaius Caesar[1] stepped forth, amid congratulating crowds, to assume the government: when suddenly word was brought that Tiberius had recovered speech and sight, and was calling for food to keep up his strength. A general panic ensued. The crowd slunk away from the side of Gaius and dispersed, every one feigning sorrow or ignorance; Gaius, in silent stupor, fallen from his high hopes, looked for the worst. But Macro was equal to the occasion. He ordered the attendants to heap clothes upon the old man, and leave the room.

Thus ended Tiberius, in his seventy-eighth year.

His character passed through like changes to his fortunes. Admirable in conduct, and in high esteem, while in a private station, or filling commands under Augustus; dark, and artful in affecting virtue, so long as Germanicus and Drusus[2] lived, he presented the same mixture of good and evil until his mother died. Then came a period of fiendish cruelty, but masked libertinism, during the days when he loved or feared Sejanus[3]: until at last, freed from all fears, lost to all shame, he broke out in wickedness and wantonness alike, and showed himself in no character but his own.

(*Ann.* vi. 50–1, tr. G. G. Ramsay.)

Agrippina the younger, the daughter of that Agrippina whom we have already seen bringing back to Rome the ashes of her husband Germanicus, was by Gnaeus Domitius Ahenobarbus the mother of the emperor Nero. She was a proud, imperious woman constantly at loggerheads with her son. When Nero

[1] Third son of Agrippina and Germanicus. He succeeded Tiberius. Better known by his nickname, Caligula.

[2] Son of Tiberius. He died in A. D. 23.

[3] The infamous favourite of Tiberius. He became Praetorian prefect (i. e. commander of all the Household troops), but his own schemes brought about his ruin and he was killed by Tiberius's orders in A. D. 31.

displeased his mother by showing attentions to the freed-woman Acte, Agrippina 'countered' by espousing the cause of Britannicus, the son of the late emperor Claudius, and, as such, perhaps a better claimant to the purple than Nero himself. Nero in consequence does away with Britannicus.

ALL this disquieted Nero; and as the day was approaching when Britannicus would complete his fourteenth year he began to turn over in his mind now his mother's violent temper, now the character of Britannicus, which had recently revealed itself in a trifling incident which had won much favour for the young man.

During the feast of the Saturnalia,[1] among other youthful amusements, the game of choosing a king by lot was played. The lot had fallen on Nero. Upon the others he laid various commands of a harmless kind; but when he bade Britannicus come forward and sing a song he thought to raise a laugh at the lad's expense, who was little used to feasts, even of a sober sort, much less to drunken orgies. Britannicus, however, with much composure, delivered himself of a poem in which was signified how he had been ousted from his father's house and from the Empire. The compassion thus aroused was the more unreservedly manifested that the incident occurred at night and at a time of frolic: Nero felt all the odium of the thing, and it intensified his hatred of Britannicus. Alarmed by Agrippina's threats, yet having no charge to advance against his brother, and not venturing openly to order his death, he resolved to proceed secretly, and ordered poison to be prepared. The agent of the crime was to be Pollio Julius, Tribune of a Praetorian Cohort, in whose custody was the notorious criminal called Locusta, who had been convicted of poisoning. Care had previously been taken that those near the person of Britannicus should be men devoid of all regard for right and loyalty.

The poison was first administered by his own governors; but

[1] December 17–19: a feast corresponding more or less to our Christmas.

either because it was not deadly enough, or that it had been so diluted as not to act at once, it passed off in an evacuation. Impatient at the delay, Nero reprimanded the Tribune, and ordered the execution of Locusta :—*They were letting his safety wait*, he said, *in expectation of a popular outcry, while preparing a defence for themselves.* Upon that they promised that the death should be as rapid as by the sword, and concocted a potion, close by Caesar's bedchamber, from poisons of known celerity.

Now it was the custom for the young princes to sit at a table of their own, less sumptuously provided, along with other nobles of their own age, and there dine in sight of their relations. At this table sat Britannicus ; and as there was a special attendant to taste his food and drink, the following device was resorted to, so as neither to omit the custom, nor yet betray the crime by causing the death of two persons. A cup without poison in it, previously tasted, but too hot to drink, was handed to Britannicus. Britannicus pushed it back as overheated, upon which some cold water containing the poison was poured into it ; and so rapidly did it permeate his whole system that speech and breathing at once failed him. The company were horrified : those not in the secret fled. But those who knew more about it stayed on, rooted to their seats, with their eyes fixed on Nero. Nero never stirred from his couch, and as if knowing nothing, remarked :—*This was no unusual thing with Britannicus ; he had been subject to fits of epilepsy from his infancy ; he would soon recover sight and consciousness.*

Agrippina's consternation, in spite of her command of countenance, showed plainly that she knew no more than the lad's own sister Octavia. She saw that her last help was gone ; and here was an example of parricide before her eyes. Even Octavia, young as she was, had learnt to conceal her sorrows, her affections, and all her feelings.

After a short silence, the festivity of the banquet was resumed. The body was burnt upon the same night ; every preparation for the modest funeral had been made. The remains were laid

in the Campus Martius, in a storm of rain so furious that the populace believed that the Gods were displaying their wrath at the crime. And yet most men were inclined to pardon it :— *Brothers*, they judged, *had ever fallen out with brothers :*[1] *there could be no partners in an Empire.*

(*Ann.* xiii. 15–17, tr. G. G. Ramsay.)

It needs a Tacitus to do justice to the story of Nero's murder of his mother, as a comparison of his version with that of Suetonius (itself powerful enough) will show. For a very effective English version the reader is referred to Stephen Philip's *Nero*.

NERO accordingly avoided private meetings with his mother, and commended her for seeking repose by retiring to her gardens, or to her country villas at Tusculum or Antium. But at last, convinced that wherever she might be she would be more than he could put up with, he resolved to make away with her. The only question was, Should it be by poison, or by the sword, or in some other way? At first, he resolved on poison : but now that Britannicus had died in that manner, it would be impossible to ascribe the event to chance if the poison were administered at the imperial table ; it would be no easy thing to tamper with the attendants of one whose familiarity with crime kept her on the alert against plots ; and she had fortified her system by prophylactics. No secret method of slaying her with the sword could be devised ; and he was afraid that any one selected for so great a crime might refuse to obey the order.

At last an ingenious plan was proposed by the freedman Anicetus, commander of the fleet at Misenum. He had been Nero's attendant in boyhood ; and there was mutual hatred between him and Agrippina. This man suggested that a vessel might be so constructed as to collapse at one part when out at sea, and throw Agrippina unawares into the water.

[1] Claudius's son, Britannicus, was born by his third wife, Messalina. After her death Claudius married Agrippina, who had already borne Nero to her first husband, Domitius.

That the deed might be done under cover of night, Nero invited her to dinner. Some information as to the plot, it seems, had reached her; and, being in doubt whether to believe it or not, she made her way to Baiae in a litter. There her fears were allayed by Nero's caresses; he received her graciously, placed her above himself at table, and talked much with her; sometimes in a tone of boyish playfulness, sometimes gravely, as though making serious communications to her. The banquet was prolonged to a late hour; he ushered her out when she departed, and clung closely to her, eye to eye, and breast to breast—either by way of adding the finishing touch to his hypocrisy, or because even that ferocious soul lingered over the last look of a mother so soon to die.

The night was bright with stars and the sea unruffled, as though the Gods had provided for the exposure of the crime. Agrippina was accompanied by two of her intimate friends, Crepereius Gallus and Acerronia. The former was standing near the helm, the latter was bending over the feet of Agrippina as she reclined upon a couch, talking happily to her of the change in her son's mood, and her own restoration to favour, when at a given signal, before the ship had gone very far, down came the canopy, which had been heavily weighted with lead, crushing Crepereius and killing him on the spot. Agrippina and Acerronia were saved by the projecting sides of the couch, which were strong enough to resist the weight falling on it; the ship failed to go to pieces; while amid the general confusion the majority, who knew nothing, interfered with those who were in the secret.

The sailors then attempted to upset the vessel by leaning over to one side; but in the scurry of the moment they failed to act together, some throwing their weight the wrong way, and so giving Agrippina the chance of falling gently into the water. Acerronia imprudently called out that she was Agrippina, crying *Help! Help! save the mother of the Emperor!* whereupon she was despatched by poles and oars and any naval weapons that came handy. Agrippina held her tongue, and thus escaping

recognition, swam off, with nothing worse than a bruised shoulder: then falling in with some fishing-boats, she was conveyed to the Lucrine lake[1] and thence to her own villa.

Nero was waiting for news of the accomplishment of the crime when word was brought to him that Agrippina had escaped with a slight injury, but that the danger had come too near to leave her in any doubt as to its author. Half dead with terror, he kept repeating that, *She might be coming at any moment in haste for vengeance: she might arm her slaves, or inflame the soldiery: or would she appear before the Senate and the people to denounce him for the shipwreck, the wound, and the killing of her friends? How could he help himself? Had Burrus or Seneca anything to suggest?* For he had summoned them both out of bed: whether they had any previous knowledge of the plot is uncertain. Neither of them spoke for a while. Attempts to dissuade Nero might be useless: possibly they thought it had come to this, that his life depended upon his being beforehand with Agrippina.

Seneca at last had the courage to look at Burrus, and ask, *Should the soldiers be ordered to kill her?* Burrus replied that *the Praetorians were devoted to the whole house of the Caesars; they cherished the memory of Germanicus, and would do no act of violence against any child of his. Let Anicetus carry through what he had promised.*

Without a moment's hesitation Anicetus asked leave to complete the crime; on hearing which words Nero declared that, *That was his first real day of Empire; and he had to thank his own freedman for the boon. Let him be off at once, taking men who would do what they were told.*

Being now informed that Agerinus had arrived with a message from Agrippina, Nero had the face to get up a stage-scene on which to found an accusation against her. Throwing down a sword between the man's legs as he was delivering his message,

[1] Originally a lake, but converted in 37 B. C. into a harbour opening up into the main bay of Baiae.

he ordered him into chains as though caught in a criminal attempt: he could thus concoct a story that his mother had sought his life, and that she had made away with herself out of shame at being detected.

Meanwhile the news of Agrippina's danger and the supposed accident had got abroad; every one, as he heard of it, ran down to the shore. Some clambered on to the jetties, others on to the nearest boats; some waded out as far as their stature permitted: some flung out their arms: the whole shore rang with prayers, shouts and lamentations, every one asking questions, none knowing what to answer. A great multitude came up with torches; on being assured of Agrippina's safety, they were setting out to offer their congratulations when they were dispersed by an armed and menacing force which appeared upon the scene.

Anicetus posted guards round Agrippina's villa. He then broke open the door, and hurried off such of the slaves as he met on his way to the door of her bed-chamber. Here a few were standing who had not been frightened away with the rest. Inside there was a dim light, and a single female attendant. Agrippina was becoming more uneasy every moment at receiving no message from her son: even Agerinus had not returned:—*Had all been going well,* she thought, *things would have worn another face: the solitude, the sudden uproar, betokened some dire peril.* Then the maid took herself off: *What?* she cried, *art thou too deserting me?* Hardly had she spoken when her eyes fell upon Anicetus, with whom were Herculeius, a Trierarch, and Obaritus, a Centurion of marines. *If he had come to visit her,* she said, *he might take back word that she had recovered; but if it were to commit a crime, she would not believe it of her son: he would never have ordered the murder of his mother.*

The assassins closed round the bed. The first blow came from the Trierarch, who struck her on the head with a bludgeon; and when the Centurion drew his sword for a death-stroke, *Strike me here!* she cried, thrusting out her womb: and so perished, under a multitude of blows.

So far all accounts agree. Some writers assert that Nero looked at his mother's dead body, and commended her beauty; but this is denied by others. The body was burnt the same night, on a dining-couch, with scanty ceremony. No mound, no enclosure, marked the spot as long as Nero reigned; but afterwards the members of Agrippina's household raised a low tumulus by the side of the road to Misenum, on the eminence from which the Dictator Caesar's villa looks out upon the bay below.

(*Ann.* xiv. 3–5, 7–9, tr. G. G. Ramsay.)

GAIUS SUETONIUS TRANQUILLUS is another Roman writer of whose life we have but little knowledge. He seems to have been born about the year A. D. 70, and to have died about 130. His father, as he tells us, was a Roman knight who fought in the first battle of Bedriacum. Suetonius himself seems to have taken no part in military or political life, except that he was for a time (if we may believe Spartianus, a late and not too truthful historian) a secretary of the emperor Hadrian. What we do know for certain is that he was a learned and studious man and a friend and contemporary of Pliny the Younger, in whose letters we find not a few mentions of him. That he was learned and studious we gather from a list of his writings preserved for us by the Greek lexicographer Suidas. These comprise books on history (or rather biography), antiquities, natural history, and grammar.

Suetonius, like Livy before him, was a storehouse for subsequent historians, but except for echoes and excerpts in the pages of such writers as Eutropius and Orosius the only works of his which survive are the *Lives of Illustrious Men* (in a fragmentary and contaminated condition) and the *Lives of the Twelve Caesars*. This last work, from which our illustrations are taken, covers the period from Julius Caesar to Domitian, who died in A. D. 96.

From a historical point of view the *Lives of the Caesars* are a strange mixture of good and bad. There is no doubt that Suetonius preferred an amusing anecdote to a historical fact—hence a multitude of such stories as that in our first extract. The *clades Variana* (see above, p. 424), on the other hand, is dismissed with a few words. There is no doubt, too, that his

anecdote at times comes perilously near to mere scandal-mongering and that modern taste shudders at much of his detail. Still on the whole there is a grasp of subject and a vividness of treatment about Suetonius's biographical work—let alone an interest of material—which have more than justified his survival.

The translation is again that of Philemon Holland.

Caligula raises the wind. A new way to pay old debts.

HAVING published an open port-sale of the residue remaining of furniture provided to set out all shews and games, he caused the said parcels to be brought forth and sold : setting the prices thereof himselfe and enhaunsing the same to such a prick, that some men enforced to buye certaine things at an extreame and exceeding rate (whereby they were empoverished and stript of all their goods) cut their owne veines and so bled to death. Well knowen it is that whiles APONIUS SATURNINUS tooke a nap and slept among the seats and stauls where these sales were held ; CAIUS put the *Bedell* in mind not to let slip and overpasse such an honorable person of Pretours degree as he was : considering, quoth he, that with his head he had so often nodded and made signes unto him, and thus taking that occasion, he never rested raising the price whiles he sat and nodded stil, untill there were fastened upon the man (ignorant, God wote, altogether of any such matter) thirteene sword-fensers, at nine millians of Sesterces.

(*Div. Calig.* 38. 4.)

Suetonius's descriptions of his characters' physical appearance are particularly happy. Here is a thumb-nail sketch of Caligula. The abnormality, not to say insanity, of the emperor comes out strongly in this chapter. For the picture of an even madder Caligula, see the brilliant monologue by G. W. Steevens in his *Monologues of the Dead.*

OF Stature hee was very tall, pale and wan-coloured : of body grosse and without all good making : his necke and shanks exceeding slender : his eyes sunke in his head, and his temples hollow, his forehead broad, and the same furrowed

and frowning : the haire of his head growing thinne, and none at all about his crowne : in all parts else hairie he was and shagged. It was therefore taken for an hainous and capitall offence, either to looke upon him as he passed by from an higher place, or once but to name a Goate upon any occasion whatsoever. His face and visage being naturally sterne and grim, hee made of purpose more crabbed and hideous : composing and dressing it at a looking-glasse all manner of waies to seeme more terrible and to strike greater feare. He was neither healthfull in body nor stoode sound in minde ; Being a child, much troubled with the falling sicknesse. In his youth, patient of labour and travaile : yet so, as that ever and anone upon a suddaine fainting that came uppon him, he was scarce able to goe, to stand, to arise, to recover himselfe and to beare up his head. The infirmitie of his minde, both himselfe perceived, and oftentimes also was minded to goe aside (unto *Anticyra*), there to purge his braine throughly. It is for certaine thought, that poysoned he was with a Potion given unto him by his wife CÆSONIA : Which in deede was a love medicine, but such an one, as crackt his wits and enraged him. He was troubled most of all with want of sleepe ; For, he slept not above three houres in a night : and in those verily hee tooke no quiet repose, but fearefull ; and skared with strange illusions and fantastical imaginations : as who among the rest dreamed upon a time that hee saw the very forme and resemblance of the sea talking with him. And heereupon for a great part of the night, what with tedious wakefulnesse and wearinesse of lying, one while sitting up in his bed, another while roaming and wandering too and fro in his Galleries (which were of an exceeding length), hee was wont to call upon and looke still for the day-light.

(*Div. Calig.* 50.)

The death of Nero.

WHEN as each one called then instantly on every side upon him, to deliver him selfe with all speede from the reproachfull contumelies and abuses, whereto hee was hourely subiect, he commaunded a grave to be made before

his face, and gave a measure therefore according to the iust proportion of his body : and therewith, if any peeces of marble stone might be found about the house, to be laid in order : That water also and wood[1] should bee gotten together for his dead body to be washed anone therewith : weeping at every word he spake, and inserting ever and anone this pittifull speech, *Qualis artifex pereo!* What an excellent Artisane am I ! and yet nowe must I die. Whiles some stay was made about these complements, PHAONS[2] Courrier brought certaine letters which hee intercepted and snatcht out of his hands. And reading therein that hee had his Dome by the Senate, To be an Enemie to the State : That he was laid for all about to be punished, *More maiorum.*[3] *More maiorum!* quoth he, what kinde of punishment is that ! and when he understoode, it implied thus much, *That the man so condemned should be stript all naked, his head locked fast in a forke, and his body scourged with rods to death* ; he was so terrified therewith, That hee caught up two daggers which hee had brought with him : and trying the points of them both how sharpe they were, he put them up againe, making this excuse, *That the fatall houre of his death was not yet come.* And one while he exhorted SPORUS[4] to begin for to lament, weepe and waile : another while he intreated hard, *That some one of them would kill him selfe first, and by his example helpe him to take his death.* Sometime also he checked and blamed his owne timorousnesse in these wordes. *I live shamefully and in reproach. Verily it becomes not* NERO ; *it becomes him not. In such cases as these hee had neede to bee wise and sober : Goe to, man, plucke up thy heart and rouse thy selfe.* Nowe by this time approached the Horsemen neere at hand, who had a warrant and precept to bring him alive. Which when hee perceived, after hee had with trembling and quaking uttered this verse.

The trampling noise of horses swift resoundeth in mine eares.[5]

[1] For washing and then burning the body.
[2] A freed-man.
[3] 'In the manner of our ancestors'.
[4] A minion of Nero.
[5] A quotation from Homer.

He set a dagger to his throat, whiles EPAPHRODITUS his Secretarie lent him his hand to dispatch him. When he was yet but halfe dead, a Centurion brake in upon him, and putting his cloake upon the wound, made semblance as if hee came to aide and succour him: Vnto whom he answered nothing but this. *Too late. And is this your loyaltie and allegeance?* In which very words he yeelded up his breath, with his eyes staring out and set in his head, to the great feare and horrour of all that were present.

(*Div. Ner.* 49.)

ORATORY

THE one Roman orator, whose speeches have come down to us, is Cicero. He lived in the last century of the Roman Republic, when oratory had, as we shall see, reached a high level. But from the account which he has himself given us in his dialogue, the *Brutus*, we are able to trace something of the history of its development, and we can supplement this with a few fragments which have been preserved almost by accident.

As far back as the fourth century B. C. oratory was recognized as an art—as something more than mere speaking—and we are told that the great Censor, Appius Claudius Caecus (*circ.* 312 B. C.), had a high reputation : Cicero says that even in his day some of his funeral orations were still extant and greatly admired. But the first name to which we are able to attach any definite character is that of MARCUS PORCIUS CATO, THE ELDER (died 149 B. C.). He was the lifelong opponent of the imported Greek learning, yet, if we may judge from Cicero's comments, he did not altogether escape from the new feeling for style which the knowledge of Greek models had brought to Rome. In a fragment from a speech of his, in which he is defending himself against a charge of extravagance in his province, uncouth and jerky as it is, we can recognize an early attempt at parallelism and antithesis. It is not easy to reproduce the effect of the Latin in English, but it might run something like this :

I ORDERED the book to be produced, in which was written my speech on the matter on which I had made a wager with Marcus Cornelius. The record was produced. The benefactions of my ancestors were recited, and there was read what I had done for the State. After both of these had been read through, there were then written in my speech the words : 'I never squandered money on bribery, neither my own nor that of our subjects.' No, no, don't write that, I exclaimed, they do not wish to hear that. Then he recited, 'I never placed officers in the cities of your subjects, to plunder their property.' Erase that too, they do not wish to hear it. Read on. 'I never divided spoil

taken from the enemy, or booty either, among my own few friends, or took it from those who had captured it.' Erase that too ; they do not in the least wish it said ; there is no need to recite it. ' I never granted passports, so that my friends might exact large sums of money by means of official warrants.' Be quick and erase that too as fast as possible. ' I never distributed money in lieu of wine-rations among my servants or my friends, or made them rich at the public expense.' I beg you, down to there erase it utterly. Mark you to what the State has come, that I cannot now, lest it count against me, even mention my services to the State, which once won me favour. It has come to this : one may do evil with impunity, but not good.

The germs of oratory are there, but they are as yet undeveloped. In the next generation we find Greek influence hard at work, producing an effective power of painting a picture and an artistic sense in the arrangement of words in the sentence, and sentences with one another, to lead up to a conscious climax. We may take as typical of this generation of orators a fragment of PUBLIUS CORNELIUS SCIPIO, THE YOUNGER (*circ.* 130 B. C.), who formed a little coterie in Rome for the study of Greek literature and the production of Latin words based on Greek models. In spite of Greek culture a certain stiffness still remains. He is rebuking the dissolute habits of the age and speaking of the corruption even of young boys and girls :

THEY are taught dishonourable accomplishments : with dulcimer and psaltry they go to the actors' school. They learn to sing songs which our ancestors would have considered a disgrace to free-born men. Free-born boys and girls go, I repeat, to the dancing-school. When some one told me this, I could not bring myself to believe that noblemen would have their children taught such things. But when I was taken to the dancing-school, so help me God, I saw there in the school more than fifty boys and girls ; and among them, a sight which above all made me weep for the State, a boy dressed as a nobleman, at least twelve years old and the son of a candidate for office, was dancing with castanets a dance that no shameless slave could have danced without disgrace !

A School of Acting, from a sarcophagus relief

Photograph—R. Moscioni

The orator of the greatest reputation before the Ciceronian age was undoubtedly the great reformer CAIUS GRACCHUS (died 120 B. C.). Cicero describes him as 'a man of the highest genius and of burning enthusiasm, trained from his boyhood to oratory: lofty in his words, wise in his thought, always weighty in style; and yet his speeches lack the final polish.' The fragments which we possess bear out Cicero's judgement very accurately: there is a fine vigour of expression and conscious art in the building up of antithesis and climax, and yet the result still feels awkward. The art is too obvious and has not yet learnt to conceal itself. We may take as a specimen the surviving fragment of his speech *Before the Censors*: it has the additional interest that Gracchus, like Cato in the passage already quoted, is defending his conduct in his province, so that the two extracts may well be compared.

I CONDUCTED myself in the province as I believed was in your interest and not as I thought might serve my own ambition. . . . I so conducted myself in the province that no one could say that I had received a penny or anything more as a gift, or that any one by my help had made profit. I was for two years in my province. If any low woman ever entered my house or any man's slave was ever approached on my behalf, then you may consider me the most outcast profligate in the world. . . . And so, gentlemen, when I set out from Rome, I carried a purse full of money; when I returned from the province, I brought it back empty. Others have taken jars with them filled with wine, and brought them back home filled with coin.

We may notice especially the elaborate and rather clumsy antithesis in the last two sentences.

In the generation before Cicero we find the names of two great orators, under both of whom Cicero studied in his youth, Marcus Antonius (Consul in 99 B.C. and grandfather of 'Mark Antony') and LUCIUS LICINIUS CRASSUS (Consul in 95 B.C.). Both of them composed their speeches according to the rules of Greek theory and built up clauses, sentences, and periods in a kind of architectural structure. Though the result was much more artistic than anything we have seen at present, it was still frigid: the rules, we feel, are master of the man. We may take a short example which Cicero quotes himself from Crassus, in which

we may notice the careful balancing of the clauses and the construction of the whole in longer or larger sentences.

WERE you without a house? No, you had one. Had you money to spare? No, you were in poverty. Wildly you dashed your head against a stone: madly you raved against men who knew you not. You set more value on your house, sordid, dark and mean as it was, than on yourself and your own fortunes.

Formal art had reached its climax, and what was needed now was that new life should be breathed into oratory, and art from being an end in itself should become the aid to expression. This was the work of MARCUS TULLIUS CICERO (106–43 B. C.[1]), but it was not accomplished all at once. When Cicero first appeared at the Bar (81 B. C.) the strict Greek fashions of Crassus and Antonius had given place to a more florid style derived from certain Greek orators of Asia Minor. Of this 'Asianism' the chief exponent was Hortensius, an elder contemporary of Cicero, and its characteristics were a great elaboration of antithesis and epigram and a tendency to almost bombastic exaggeration. The young Cicero did not escape from its influence, and its traces are very marked in a speech which he delivered in 80 B. C., *For Sextus Roscius of Ameria*. Roscius had been accused of murdering his father, and in a passage, which will serve well to illustrate Cicero's early style, he is commenting on the horrors of the traditional punishment for parricide, that the guilty man should be sewn up in a sack and thrown from the bridge into the Tiber. We notice the strained effort at effect and a general exaggeration which makes the last part of the passage almost ridiculous.

IN many ways we can see that our ancestors surpassed all other nations not only in arms, but also in wisdom and intelligence, but above all in this that they invented a unique punishment for unnatural sons. In this matter I would have you consider how far superior they were in forethought to those who are said to have been the wisest men in other nations. Athens, as long as she held her empire, is said to have been the most far-sighted of States, and in that State they say that the wisest man was

[1] See pp. 93, 304 ff., 357 ff., 466 ff., 492 f.

Cicero's country. Modern Arpinum in the middle distance, and in the foreground an ancient polygonal wall

Photograph by Mr. R. Gardner

Solon, who wrote the laws under which they live to this day. When he was asked why he had ordained no punishment for the man who had killed his father, he replied that he never thought any one would do it. He was thought to have acted wisely in appointing no penalty for a crime which had never till then been committed, lest he should seem to be suggesting rather than prohibiting it. How far wiser were our ancestors! Since they recognized that nothing was so sacred that it would not some day be violated by a criminal, they devised a unique punishment for parricide, so that men who could not be kept in the right path by their own conscience might be deterred from crime by the greatness of the penalty. They ordered that parricides should be sewn up in a sack alive and thrown into the river.

What amazing wisdom, gentlemen! See how they withdrew such a criminal from the realm of nature, when at one blow they deprived him of sky, sun, earth, and water, and ordained that a man who had slain him to whom he owed his birth should forgo all the elements from which all things are born! They would not cast their bodies to the beasts, lest we should find the very animals made wilder by contact with such foul criminals: they would not cast them naked into the river, lest, when they had been washed down to the sea, they might pollute the water by which all other things, when contaminated, are held to be purified; in short there is nothing so common and mean that they left them any part in it. For what indeed is so universal as breath to the living, earth to the dead, sea to the storm-tossed, shore to the ship-wrecked? Yet these criminals, as long as their life may last, cannot breathe the air of heaven, when they die the earth will not touch their bones, tossed on the waves they will never be washed clean, cast adrift even on the rocks they will not lie peacefully in death. (*Pro Rosc. Am.* 25. 69.)

In the years that immediately followed a physical breakdown made it necessary for Cicero to travel abroad, and under the tuition of Molon of Rhodes he learnt a more sober and temperate style of oratory, which could still indeed rise to great heights of

passion, but was normally less strained and less self-conscious. Ten years later, in 70 B.C., he had entered upon public life and had held the office of *quaestor*, or financial officer, in Sicily. After he had left the island the Sicilians had suffered three years of unparalleled oppression at the hands of the governor, Caius Verres. When Verres went out of office at the end of 71 B.C. the Sicilians begged Cicero to undertake his prosecution for extortion. The trial came on in August 70 B. C., and Cicero, in order to defeat the procrastinating tactics of his opponents, contented himself with a short speech and called his evidence. The effect was overwhelming: Hortensius abandoned the defence and Verres fled into exile. Cicero then published a tremendous indictment in five books which he might have delivered and which we possess in full. From this we may take two characteristic passages. In the first he is describing with an almost playful irony the manner in which Verres spent his years as governor. The smooth, easy narrative and the cynical touches are very different from the white-hot earnestness of the speech for Roscius.

NOW let me tell you to begin with, gentlemen, how easy and pleasant, thanks to his careful planning, he made the duty of travelling about his province, a duty which is of the first importance for a military governor and is particularly necessary in Sicily. First of all during the winter months he invented this brilliant antidote for the excessive cold and the violence of storms and torrents. He selected the town of Syracuse, whose natural situation and climate are said to be so beautiful that not a single day passes, however wild and stormy, on which the sun is not seen at some time or other. Here that model governor used to live during the winter months, and it was not easy to see him, I will not say out of doors, but even out of bed: the short day was occupied by banquets, the long night by vice and debauchery.

But when spring came—and, mark you, he did not reckon its beginning by the arrival of the west wind or by any particular constellation, but he used to hold that spring was coming as soon as he saw a rose—he would devote himself to his toilsome marches, and on them his endurance and energy did not permit him to be

seen on horseback. For he used to be carried along, like the old kings of Bithynia, in a large litter, in which there was a cushion of transparent Maltese linen, stuffed with roses : he wore a wreath on his head and another round his neck, and from time to time lifted to his nostrils a sachet of the finest cambric, marked with tiny spots and filled with rose-petals. Having thus accomplished his march, when he arrived at a town he would be carried still in the litter straight to his bedroom. There, as you have heard from many witnesses on oath, Sicilian magistrates and Roman knights would come to visit him : disputes were put before him in secret, and shortly afterwards his decisions were publicly carried away. After he had spent a little time in his bedroom laying down the law, not by justice but for bribes, he thought that the remainder of his time might fairly be given to the deities of love and wine.

. . . . . .

Then came the height of summer, the season which all other governors of Sicily have been accustomed to spend in travelling, thinking, no doubt, that the best time for going about the province is when the corn is on the threshing-floor ; then the farm-labourers are gathered together, it is easy to see how many slaves there are, and the work is at its busiest : the abundance of the crops is an inducement for travel, and the season suggests no difficulty. Yet at this very time, when other praetors are making their journeys, this up-to-date governor used to pitch a permanent camp in the most lovely spot in Syracuse. At the very entrance to the harbour, just where the coastline curves in from the open sea towards the city, he would place his canvas tent. Here he moved from the governor's house, which was formerly King Hiero's palace, and all through the summer he was never seen outside the favoured spot. . . . During those days, while Verres, dressed in a scarlet cloak and a long tunic, was spending his time in banquets with women, no one was offended or annoyed that the magistrate was not to be found in his court, that the law was not administered nor trials held : they

cared not at all if that spot on the shore rang with the voices of women and the singing of choruses, while in the forum there was never a whisper of pleading or judgement : for it was not justice and the law which were then absent from the forum, but violence and tyranny together with cruel and shameless plundering of property.

(*In Verr.* II. v. 10. 26.)

In the next passage we have a rather higher tone of indignation. There had been an affair with some pirates, in which the Sicilian navy, owing largely, as Cicero suggests, to the inadequate equipment which Verres had given it, had been disgraced. Verres condemned the captains of the ships and imprisoned them with a refinement of cruelty. There is irony here too, but it is of a tenser quality.

THE condemned captains are thrown into prison. Punishment is meted out to them, and exacted from their wretched parents : they are forbidden to visit their sons, forbidden to bring their own children food and clothing. Their fathers, whom you see before you, lay prostrate at the prison door, their poor mothers passed the night at the gate excluded from looking on their children for the last time : yet they asked nothing more than permission to catch their sons' last breath on their lips. In front of them was the prison warder, the governor's executioner, who struck death and terror into the hearts of Sicilians and citizens of Rome alike, the lictor Sextius, and he exacted a fixed tariff for every sigh and groan. 'To go in', said he, 'costs so much, to take in food, so much.' No one could refuse. 'Well,' he added, 'what will you give me to insure that your son is killed at the first blow ? To save him from long torture, from more than one blow of the axe, in short from a painful death ?' Even for this purpose money had to be given to the lictor. What great and unbearable pain is this ! What a weight of bitter misfortune ! The parents were compelled to purchase for their children, not life, but a speedy death. Even the young men themselves would talk to their warder Sextius about their execution and beg for

the one swift blow ; the last prayer the sons made to their parents was to give the lictor money, to lighten their torture. Many cruel sufferings were devised for the parents and relations, many indeed ; but it might be supposed that their sons' death would end them. Not so. Can cruelty go any further ? Yes, a way can be found : for when they have been beheaded or put to death their bodies will be thrown to the beasts. If the parents find this distressing, they must purchase the right to bury them. You have heard Onasus, a distinguished citizen of Segesta, say that he paid money to Verres' creature Timarchides for the burial of the captain Heracleius. You cannot say, Verres : 'It is only parents angry at the loss of their sons who come before us' ; for this is the evidence of an eminent man of the highest rank, and he is not speaking of his own son. There was no one in Syracuse at the time who had not heard, who did not know, that even the prisoners themselves had to bargain thus with Timarchides for their burial. They spoke to Timarchides in public, all their relations were brought in to hear them, the price of their funerals was openly fixed while they were still alive.

(*In Verr.* II. v. 48. 117.)

The successful prosecution of Verres left Cicero the acknowledged leader of the Roman Bar and henceforward Hortensius had often to be content with appearing as his junior : this meant also the victory of Cicero's modified Greek style over his rival's Asianism. His manner and methods were indeed now formed, and we shall try simply to observe them in practice on different themes and in different circumstances. In theory Cicero believed in the combination of three styles recognized as distinct by Greek writers : the 'grand' style was to be used in vehement passages for swaying the minds of the audience, the 'plain' style for legal argument, and between them a 'middle' or 'moderate' style for narrative.

A typical example of the last may be taken from the speech *For Cluentius*, whom Cicero had to defend in 66 B.C. The main charge was one of poisoning, but the prosecutor had made great capital out of an accusation that Cluentius had procured the condemnation of his stepfather, Oppianicus, in a previous trial by bribing the jury. Cicero gives a long and humorous account of the trial, the object of which is to show that the bribery was,

if anything, on the other side and had been conducted by an unscrupulous person called Staienus. In reading the passage it is perhaps of interest to know that after the acquittal of Cluentius Cicero boasted that he had 'thrown dust in the eyes of the jury'.

SEEING the now desperate position of Oppianicus, whom the two previous verdicts had left without a leg to stand on, Staienus roused him from his despondency by the promises he made, and bade him withal never despair of deliverance. Oppianicus, on his part, began to implore the rascal to point out to him some way of bribing the jury; on which he told him, as Oppianicus afterwards informed us, that there was not a man in the country who could do it 'except myself'. But at first he began to make difficulties; he was standing for the aedileship, he said, against men of the highest rank, and he was afraid of incurring unpopularity and discredit. His scruples were subsequently overcome; and after beginning by demanding an immense sum of money he came down in the end to a negotiable figure, and bade Oppianicus send to his house six hundred and forty thousand sesterces. As soon as this sum was brought to him, the dirty scoundrel began to indulge in thoughts and reflexions of this sort: 'Nothing could suit my interests better than that Oppianicus should be convicted. If he is acquitted, I shall either have to distribute this money among the jurors, or else give it back to him; whereas if he is found guilty there will be no one to recover it.' So he bethinks himself of a remarkable device. Gentlemen, you will more readily credit the true statement I am making if you will have the goodness to go back a considerable space, and recall to mind the life and disposition of Gaius Staienus; for it is just the opinion we have of the character of an individual that enables us to determine what his conduct may or may not have been.

Being necessitous and extravagant, audacious, cunning, and treacherous, and seeing such a large sum of money deposited in his wretched, poverty-stricken lodgings, he began to turn his mind to all sorts of roguery and fraud. 'Shall I give it to the jurors? If I do, what shall I gain for myself save danger and

disgrace? Can't I hit on some way of making Oppianicus's conviction inevitable? What if some accident (nothing in this world is impossible) should deliver him from danger: should I not have to give it up? Well, he is tottering on the brink, let us tip him over: he is done for, let us give him the finishing stroke.' The plan he took was to promise money to certain unprincipled jurors, and afterwards to keep it to himself; for he thought that the men of character among them would of their own accord deal rigorously with the case, and his object was to make those of less principle enraged with Oppianicus for having played them false. So, with his usual wrongheadedness and reversal of the proper order of things, he begins with Bulbus. Finding him in low spirits and inclined to yawn, because it was long since he had made any money, he gives him a playful poke: 'I say, Bulbus,' says he, 'will you stand in with me, so that you and I may not serve our country for naught?' As soon as he heard the words 'not for naught', Bulbus exclaims, 'I'll follow wherever you like to lead; but what's your game?' Thereupon Staienus promises him forty thousand sesterces in the event of Oppianicus's acquittal, and asks him to approach the others with whom he was in the habit of gossiping. He himself, the contriver and cooker-up of the whole scheme, goes on to sprinkle a drop of Gutta-seasoning on his vegetable friend Bulbus[1]; after which Bulbus was not thought at all a bitter pill by those whose palates had been tickled by a titbit of promise from what he said to them. One day passed, and then another, and the matter still seemed rather unsettled; there was no appearance of an intermediary agent, or security for the payment of the money. On this Bulbus, looking quite sprightly, accosts the fellow in his most insinuating manner: 'Holloa, Paetus'—for this was the surname which Staienus had chosen for himself from the illustrious house of the Aelii, lest if he called himself a Ligur[2] he might

[1] A typical Ciceronian pun: Gutta means a drop and Bulbus an onion.

[2] Ligur was a cognomen of the family of the Aelii; the Ligurians were proverbially untrustworthy.

be thought to be using a tribal rather than a family surname—'Holloa, Paetus,' says he, 'about that business of which you spoke to me; they are asking me where the money is.' Then did this unconscionable impostor, gorged with the gain he made in courts of justice, and already brooding in hope and imagination on the money which he had stowed away, begin to knit his brows. Call to mind his features and the unreal and hypocritical look he used to wear. He complains that Oppianicus has played him false! He, who was one huge piece of roguery and falsehood, and who by zealous application and a sort of knavish craft had given an additional flavour to the vices with which nature had endowed him, roundly asserts that Oppianicus has defrauded him, and says moreover, to prove it, that, in the open voting which was to be the order of the day, he would give his vote for a conviction!

(*Pro Cluentio*, 25. 68, tr. Peterson.)

So far we have seen Cicero as the advocate in the law courts. Now we may make his acquaintance as a politician. In 63 B.C. he attained the highest civic dignity of the consulship and found himself confronted with a conspiracy against the State, whose importance he probably magnified, led by some reckless young aristocrats with the notorious Catiline at their head. Cicero set about to expose and suppress the conspiracy. On November 7 some attempt was made to assassinate him, and on the following day Cicero delivered in the Senate the *First Catilinarian Oration*, in which he explained Catiline's intentions and urged him to leave Rome. We may take the peroration of this speech as an example of Cicero's use of the 'grand' manner: Dr. Blakiston's translation admirably brings out its dignity and gravity.

TOO long indeed, my lords, have we been environed by this perilous and treacherous conspiracy; but it has chanced that all these crimes, all this ancient recklessness and audacity, has matured at last and has burst with full force upon the year of my consulship. If then out of the whole gang this single brigand only is removed, we shall perhaps for a brief period think ourselves relieved from anxiety and alarm. But the real peril will only have been driven under the surface; it

will still lurk deep in the veins and vital organs of the State. As men stricken with a serious disease, when they lie hot and tossing with fever, often seem to be relieved at first by a draught of cold water, but afterwards are much more seriously and violently attacked; so this disease, which has infected the State, may be relieved by the punishment of Catiline, but will oppress it with greater violence if the others survive. Let the disloyal then withdraw, let them separate themselves from the loyal, let them herd together in one place, let there be a wall, as I have often said, to segregate them from us. Let them cease to plot the assassination of the Consul in his own house, let them cease to mass their forces round the city praetor's tribunal, let them cease to beleaguer the Senate house with drawn swords and to prepare their grenades and matches for firing the city. In short, let the political principles of every man be visibly written upon his countenance. I promise you this, my lords, that in me and my colleague there shall be found such energy, in you yourselves such leadership, in the Roman knights such courage, in all loyal men such unanimity, that by Catiline's departure from Rome you shall see everything that is evil exposed to searching light and suppressed by adequate punishment.

With these fateful words, Catiline, to the true preservation of the State, to the wreck and ruin of yourself and to the destruction of those who have banded themselves with you in every sort of crime and treason, get you gone to your unholy and abominable campaign. Then shalt thou, great Jupiter, who wast established by Romulus with the same religious rites as this city, thou whom we name rightly the Stablisher of this city and empire, keep this man and his associates far from the fanes and from the other temples, far from the buildings and walls of the city, far from the lives and fortunes of all the citizens; and these men who hate the loyal, who make war on their country and pillage Italy, who are linked together by bonds of guilt and by complicity in crime, thou shalt afflict in life and in death with torments that will never cease.

(*In Cat.*, i. 13, 31, tr. Blakiston.)

The conspiracy was successfully unmasked : some of Catiline's associates were arrested in Rome and, after a famous debate in the Senate, executed on Cicero's recommendation ; Catiline himself was defeated in battle early the next year at Pistoria (near Florence) by Cicero's colleague in the consulship, Marcus Antonius.[1] But towards the end of 63 B.C. Catiline's party seem to have made an expiring effort to unseat the Consul-elect, Lucius Murena, on a charge of bribery. Cicero, perhaps exalted by his success, digresses even more in this speech than was his wont in the law-courts, and the extract given below is taken from a long digression in which he twits his opponent, Marcus Cato, with his Stoic principles. It is again an example of his humorous and ironic manner, and is interesting to us as showing how far irrelevance was permitted in a legal speech at Rome : it also gives us a glimpse of Cicero the philosopher.

SINCE I have not to speak here in an unlearned assembly or at a meeting of country-folk, I will discuss with some freedom those humane studies which are known and appreciated both by myself and by you. You must realize, gentlemen, that those unique and inspired qualities which we all recognize in Marcus Cato are due to his own character : if at any time we feel something lacking in him, we must attribute the want not to his nature but to his training. There was once a man named Zeno, a teacher of great distinction, the followers of whose system are called Stoics. His ideas and his maxims are on these lines : that a wise man is never touched by personal influence and never forgives a sin ; that no one but a fool or a knave shows pity ; that it is unmanly to listen to an appeal or to be placated ; that the wise alone can be beautiful, however misshapen they may be, rich, however indigent, kings, even if they are in slavery ; but us who are not wise they call runaways, exiles, enemies or even lunatics. They hold that all sins are equal ; every mistake is an infamous crime, and it is an equal misdeed to strangle a barndoor fowl unnecessarily and to strangle one's own father ; the wise man, they say, has no opinions, never repents, never makes a mistake, never changes his opinion.

All this our quick-witted friend, Marcus Cato, eagerly seized

[1] See p. 401.

from the teaching of learned philosophers, not for purposes of debate, as most men do, but as precepts for life. Suppose the tax-farmers made a request ; mind that personal claims have no weight. Suppose some wretched victims of misfortune come to present their petition : you'll be guilty of the vilest crime, says he, if you act in the least degree under the influence of pity. Suppose a man confesses his misdeed and seeks pardon ; 'it's a sin to pardon a crime.' But it was only a trifling error : 'all sins are on a level.' If you have once said a thing, it is fixed and unalterable. Suppose you were influenced not by facts, but by common opinion : 'the philosopher knows no opinions.' If you tell him he has made a mistake, he regards it as libel. From this school of thought we get arguments of this kind : 'I declared in the Senate that I would prosecute a certain candidate for the consulship.' But you spoke in anger. 'The philosopher,' he replies, 'is never angry.' But it was said on the spur of the moment. 'Only a shameless man,' he says, 'will tell a lie: it is disgraceful to change one's opinion, a crime to listen to an appeal, a sin to show pity.'

But my school—for I admit, Cato, that I too in my young days distrusted my own judgement and looked for the assistance of philosophy—my school, I say, the followers of Plato and Aristotle, being moderate and reasonable beings, hold that personal considerations ought sometimes to have weight with the philosopher ; that a good man does show pity ; that there are different degrees of wrong-doing and that punishment must vary accordingly ; that a consistent man may yet pardon ; that even the philosopher often holds an opinion when he does not know ; that he is sometimes angry, that he can hear an appeal and be appeased ; that he sometimes alters what he has said, if he sees it is right to do so, that he occasionally abandons his opinion, and that all virtue is in a sense a mean. If chance had led you, Cato, with all your great gifts, to such masters as these, it is true you would not have been a better or braver man, nor more self-controlled or just—for that you cannot be—but you would have been a little more ready to be merciful. (*Pro Murena*, 29. 61.)

One gem of a different style must be quoted from this period of Cicero's career. In 62 B. C. he was called upon to defend the poet Archias, who was accused of usurping the rights of citizenship. The greater portion of a very brief speech is occupied with a consideration of the value of poetry and literature. Just before the famous passage to be quoted, Cicero has argued that it is poets who have preserved the glory of heroes. Now he asks what is the value of literature itself.

SOME one will ask, perhaps: what about the great men themselves whose deeds are immortalized in literature? were they trained in this art which you extol so highly? It is not easy to state as much about all of them, but I know what answer I can give. I admit that there have been many men of conspicuous courage and valour, who without any training, by a natural—I might almost say a divine—instinct, have of their own accord possessed self-control and seriousness of aim: I will go further and say that nature without education has more often produced valour and renown than education without nature. Yet I maintain that when to a great and brilliant nature there is added methodical training in literature the result is a unique and indefinable pre-eminence. Among those who have attained it are the heroic Africanus, who was known to our fathers, and Caius Laelius and Lucius Furius, men with perfect self-restraint and moderation, and that brave man of prodigious learning in his time, Marcus Cato the Elder: certainly, if they had not been helped by literature towards the attainment and practice of virtue, they would never have devoted their time to studying it. And even if we could not point to results so valuable as these, if it were merely enjoyment that was sought in such pursuits, still, I take it, you would consider a recreation like this humane and liberal. Other enjoyments are not suited to all seasons, all times of life, all places; the study of literature stimulates us in boyhood, delights us in old age, is an ornament in prosperity, a comfort and a refuge in adversity, a joy at home, no hindrance abroad; it helps us through a sleepless night, it goes with us on our travels and is our companion in the country.

(*Pro Archia*, 7. 15.)

The next year or two were used by Cicero in endeavouring to cement and perpetuate the party of the aristocrats, or *optimates* ('best men'), as he loves to call them; but the formation in 60 B. C. of the informal coalition between Caesar, Pompey, and Crassus, known as the First Triumvirate, upset his plans. Caesar and Pompey were really playing against one another for a despotism, which was subversive of the old senatorial government. Cicero refused to be cajoled by them and showed such opposition that the triumvirs were obliged to secure his exile. In 58 B. C. he spent a miserable year in Macedonia, and returning in the summer of the next year he made the mistake of assuming that things were as he left them. In a speech *For Sestius* delivered in 56 B. C. he almost openly renewed his opposition to the triumvirs and strove to rally the aristocratic party. The following passage gives his conception of the functions and ideals of a 'conservative' party, and is not without significance even in these days:

THERE have always been in this State two classes of those who have made it their object to engage in political life and to win distinction in it: of these classes the one preferred to be called the popular party, the other the aristocrats—and both strove to act up to their name. Those who wished their words and actions to find favour with the people were called the popular party, those who strove to win for their policy the approval of the best citizens were called the aristocrats. Who then are these 'best citizens'? As far as numbers go, if that is what you mean, their name is legion—for otherwise we could not hold our own: there are leaders of public opinion and those who follow their lead, there are men of the highest ranks of society, who have a prescriptive right to a seat in the House, there are inhabitants of the boroughs and country gentlemen, there are merchants and even freedmen in the ranks of the aristocrats. As far as numbers go, as I have said, the class is spread far and wide, but, to remove all misapprehension, the whole class may be comprised in a short definition: he is an aristocrat who does no harm to the State, is not naturally immoral and criminal, and is not involved in private difficulties. And so it turns out that those whom you called a 'gang' are all who are sound in heart

and limb and have a happy home. Those who follow their wishes, interests and opinions in governing the State are counted the champions of the aristocrats—or rather staunch aristocrats themselves and distinguished citizens, leaders in fact of the State. What then is the guiding-star of these helmsmen of the State, on which they must keep their eyes and by which they must steer their course? It is that which is the heart's desire of all sound good and happy men—peace with honour. All those who desire this end are aristocrats, and those who secure it are considered great men and the saviours of the State; for in its administration men should neither be such slaves to honour that they do not provide for peace, nor yet enamoured of any form of peace which is inconsistent with honour.

These are the roots of this 'Peace with Honour', which our leaders must preserve and defend even at the risk of life; these are its branches: the ceremonies of religion, the auspices, the powers of the magistrates, the authority of the Senate, our laws and traditions, the law-courts and the pronouncements of the judges, good faith, our colonies and subject-states, the glory of our empire, the art of war, the stability of finance. To be the defender and champion of all these sacred things needs a great heart, a great mind, great patriotism. For indeed in a State so large as ours there is always a great number of persons who either through fear of punishment and their own guilty conscience are driven to seek revolution and an upheaval of the constitution, or because of some innate mental aberration thrive on civil discord and dissension, or else because of their financial difficulties prefer to perish in a general conflagration rather than by themselves. And when such men find leaders and instigators to their vicious aims, then storms run high in the State, and those who have claimed to hold the helm of their country's fortunes must keep close watch and strive with all the knowledge and devotion they possess to preserve those roots and those branches of which I spoke just now, to hold on their course and make for the haven of peace and honour. If, gentlemen, I were to deny that this path is rough and steep and beset with traps and dangers, I should

speak false : for indeed I have not only known this always, but I have myself experienced it more than any other man.

There are always larger forces ready to attack than to defend the State. Reckless and abandoned men are set in motion by a nod, often indeed they rise of their own accord against the State, but loyal citizens are for some reason slower to move : they neglect things at first, and at last, when they are moved by sheer necessity, it sometimes happens through their hesitation and procrastination that, while they wish to preserve peace even at the cost of honour, they lose both alike. Then those who wished to be the champions of the State, if they are not in earnest, give up the task; if they are faint-hearted, they run away: few remain at their post and endure all things for the good of the State. They are men like your father, Marcus Scaurus, who resisted every revolutionary from Caius Gracchus to Quintus Varius, and was never shaken by violence, by threats, by unpopularity ; like Quintus Metellus, your great-uncle, who as censor dared to condemn Lucius Saturninus, then at the height of his popularity, and would not place Gracchus, the Pretender, on the census-roll in spite of the fury of an excited mob ; and when at last he alone had refused to swear obedience to a law which he believed was illegally passed he preferred to abandon his country rather than his opinion, and went into exile. Or, if I may leave examples in history, which are as numerous as the glory of our empire can require, and yet not mention the names of the living, such a man within our own recollection was Quintus Catulus, whom neither the blasts of danger nor the breath of success could ever through hope or fear deflect from the course which he had chosen.

Let these be your pattern, in heaven's name, if you would seek for honour, for praise, for glory ! These are noble, divine, immortal : they are crowned with fame, they are enshrined in the records of history, they are handed down to future generations. It is a toilsome path, I own : there are great dangers, I admit. Well has the poet said :

Full many a snare besets the good man's path ·

yet, as he adds,

> 'tis folly to demand
> What many crave and many view askance,
> Unless with all thy heart and all thy might
> Thou'lt bear the heavy burden to the end.
>
> (*Pro Sestio*, 45. 96.)

During the years that followed, events were moving rapidly towards civil war. Caesar was gathering his forces during his great campaigns in Gaul, and Pompey was almost helplessly awaiting his return in Rome, allying himself more and more with the constitutional party. In Rome itself there had been great disorders, and armed gangs, representing different interests, often engaged in bloody conflicts in the streets and in the Forum. The chief leaders of these gangs were Clodius, the tribune who had secured Cicero's exile, and Milo, one of the tribunes who promoted his recall. On January 18, 52 B. C., these two met accidentally on the road a few miles from Rome, and in the fracas which resulted Clodius was killed. A special court was appointed to try Milo, and Cicero undertook to defend him. At the critical moment the sight of Pompey's armed soldiers unnerved him and he broke down, but he had prepared an elaborate speech which he afterwards published. The extract here given is once again in the 'grand' manner and deals with the providence 'in the affairs of man'.

BUT the gratitude which is due from you for this benefit, gentlemen of the jury, is claimed by the Fortune of Rome, by the good luck of your own generation and by the immortal powers. Nor can any one entertain any other view, unless he is a man who holds that there is no divine force or providence at all, who is not impressed by the greatness of our empire or by the sun above us, or by the movements of the heavenly bodies, or by the regular succession of the seasons, or even by what is greatest of all, the wisdom of our ancestors who themselves honoured most piously and handed down to us their descendants these cults and ceremonies and religious observances. There exists, assuredly there exists, a Divine Power; nor is it conceivable that there is in these frail bodies of ours an active

and sentient principle, and none in the vast and magnificent operations of nature. Unless perhaps men think it does not exist, because it is not observed and distinguished by our eyes; as if indeed we could see and perceive by the senses the exact nature and seat of that mental faculty which gives us knowledge and foresight and the power of speech and action at the present moment. It was then that Power, the same power which has often conferred amazing blessings and benefits on this city, which crushed and trampled on that deadly monster, in that it originally inspired him with the idea of daring to irritate by violence and openly challenge the bravest of men, thus incurring defeat from the one man whose defeat would have secured for him a perpetual immunity and licence for crime. No human wisdom, nor even any ordinary act of Providence, brought about that result. The holy places themselves, which saw that brute overthrown, must have aroused themselves and asserted their rights in dealing with him. For to you now, ye hills and groves of Alba, to you, I say, I appeal and call, and to you, ye ruined altars of the Albans, as old and as sacred as the cults of the Roman people, ye altars whom Clodius in his reckless insanity, after felling and devastating the most sacred groves, had smothered with his crazy basement works, it was your sanctities that then had potency, your power prevailed, which he had profaned with every kind of crime; and then from thy lofty mount of Latium, holy Jupiter, whose lakes and groves and precincts he had stained with every sort of abominable and criminal debauchery, thou didst at last awake to inflict punishment on him. By you are those penalties exacted, by all of you and in your sight, penalties deferred indeed but just and well deserved.

(*Pro Milone*, 30, 83, tr. Blakiston.)

For many years Cicero's voice was silent. In the civil war he sided with Pompey, and when after the defeat at Pharsalia in 48 B. C. he returned to Italy he wandered sadly from one of his country-villas to another, writing great works of philosophy and unphilosophical letters to his friends. Caesar was at some pains

to conciliate him and once or twice Cicero came out of his retreat to pronounce before the all-powerful dictator a plea for the restoration of some opponent. There is skill in these speeches, but their fulsome flattery of the tyrant makes them sad reading to those who have known the outspoken Cicero of old days. But the murder of the tyrant on the Ides of March 44 B. C. loosed Cicero's tongue once more. There was a chance of restoring the old constitution, if only the new tyrant, Mark Antony, could be overthrown. Cicero threw all his weight into this task, and pronounced the great series of *Philippic Orations*, so called from their likeness to the speeches in which the Athenian orator Demosthenes attacked Philip of Macedon (see *Pageant of Greece*, p. 362). Our last quotation, the peroration of the second of these speeches, will show that all the old fire had returned.

REMEMBER therefore, Marcus Antonius, that great day on which you declared the dictatorship abolished; call up before your eyes the joy of the Senate and the people of Rome; contrast it with this present trafficking on the part of yourself and your friends: and then you will understand what a gulf there is fixed between gain and glory. But no doubt, as some men are prevented by a diseased or torpid condition of the sense of taste from enjoying their food, so the profligate, the miser, and the violent criminal have no relish for true glory. Yet if glory cannot attract you to right courses, has fear no power to deter you from the foulest deeds? You do not fear the courts of law. If you rely on your innocence, I commend you; if you rely on violence, do you not understand what a man who does not fear the law for such reasons as yours must necessarily apprehend? But if you are not afraid of brave men and eminent citizens because your person is secured against them by armed men, your own followers, believe me, will not much longer bear with you. And what sort of existence is it for a man to fear his own friends day and night? Yet you cannot pretend that they are bound to you by greater obligations than those by which your master held certain of those who slew him, or that you are in any respect to be compared with him. He had genius, method, a retentive memory, a taste for literature, a character pains-

taking, thoughtful, and energetic. His campaigns, though disastrous to the constitution, were still imposing. For many years he had set his mind on regal power, and after great toil and great perils he had accomplished his design. By public shows and buildings, by bounties and banquets, he had conciliated the ignorant masses ; he had firmly secured his adherents by substantial rewards and his opponents by a pretence of clemency. In a word, he had at last brought a community of free men, partly terrorized and partly acquiescent, to tolerate a slavery grown familiar. I can class you with him in your appetite for despotic power ; but in no other respect are you in any way worthy to be compared. Still, out of all the evils of which he left the brand upon our unhappy country this much good has come, that the Roman people has learnt at last how much to trust this man or that, on whom to rely, of whom to beware. Have you not reflected on this ? do you not comprehend that one lesson is enough to teach brave men how essentially noble, how deserving of gratitude, how sure of renown, is the act of tyrannicide ? Or do you think that when men did not endure him, they will endure you ? In the near future, believe me, there will be competition for this task, and the moment to strike, if it tarries, will be anticipated. Consider, I pray you, your country at last ; consider your ancestors, and not your associates. Treat me as you will ; but be reconciled to your country. However, you will take your own course ; I will state my position for myself. I defended my country when I was a young man ; I will not desert her in my old age. I despised Catiline's swords ; I shall not quail before yours. Nay, I would willingly bare my breast to them if the freedom of this State could be guaranteed at once at the price of my life, that the anguish of the Roman people might at least effect the deliverance of which it has been so long in travail. Yes, if nearly twenty years ago in this very temple I said that one who had lived to be Consul could not complain of an early death, how much more truly shall I not now say the same of one who is old ? To me indeed, my lords, death

is now actually desirable, since I have discharged all the tasks that have been imposed upon me and all that I have undertaken. I have but two desires now, the one, that when I die I may leave the Roman people still in the enjoyment of freedom—no greater boon than this can be granted me by heaven; the other, that every man may fare well or ill, as his conduct towards his country deserves.

(*Phil.* ii. 45, 115, tr. Blakiston.)

But this brave and whole-hearted opposition to Antony sealed Cicero's doom, and when in 43 B. C. Antony, Octavius, and Lepidus were appointed as a special commission to govern Rome one of their first acts was to order the execution of Cicero, and he met his fate like a man.

With Cicero Roman oratory reached its climax, and it also perished. Under the Empire circumstances did not favour great speaking. The debates in the servile Senate were for the most part formal, and the transference of the law-courts from the open air of the Forum to small indoor courts tended to check the flow of eloquence, even as it suppressed irrelevance. In his *Dialogue on Famous Orators* (*c.* A. D. 74) Tacitus laments the decay of the Republican eloquence, and the only speech of Imperial times which has come down to us is a *Panegyric* on the emperor Trajan pronounced by the younger Pliny in A. D. 100, a work as frigid in style as it is degraded in its sentiments. Yet more perhaps than Greek, Roman oratory has been the model for the great speakers of the modern world, and the English orators of the eighteenth century owed to it both their general conception of eloquence and the technique of their style. It would not be untrue to say that more than any single writer of antiquity Cicero has left his mark on the literature of the world.

PHILOSOPHY

PHILOSOPHY was not a natural growth at Rome: indeed, it was regarded by the average Roman with definite mistrust, and we hear that philosophers were banished from the city in 161 B.C. and again as late as the reign of Domitian. The Roman, essentially a man of action engaged in the practical business of war or politics, was not given to pausing on his way to reflect deeply on the nature of the world or the ultimate meaning of human life. If he asked questions at all, they were as to practical matters of conduct, but even then he was not inclined to debate, but loved to formulate his conclusions in pithy proverbial sayings which he could keep by him as maxims to be acted upon. Among the few fragments of early Roman literature which have been preserved we find such aphorisms attributed to Appius Claudius the Censor (312 B.C.) or to a mysterious personage known as Marcius the seer: 'Every man must forge his own fortune', 'When you see a friend, forget your woes', 'Be the last to speak, the first to hold your tongue' are typical examples. Similar maxims were embodied with great frequency in Roman drama, in tragedy and comedy alike, and many of them have remained as household words in modern life: 'The quarrels of lovers are the renewal of love', ''Tis sweet to receive praise from a man who is praised himself', 'I am a human being, I count nothing human alien to me'. In the later days of the Republic they seem to have been regarded as the special prerogative of the mime and an anthology was made of the apophthegms of Publilius Syrus,[1] a mime-writer contemporary with Cicero: they are of no great merit either in style or content and one or two may here be taken to represent the rest: 'Expect from others what you do to them', 'The wise is master of his lusts, the fool their slave', 'Oblivion is the remedy for wrongs', 'To make a friend blush is to lose a friend'. Such sayings show a certain interest in ethical matters—more often perhaps in character for its own sake—and some shrewdness of insight, but they do not imply the kind of thought which gives birth to a national philosophy. Nor indeed was there ever such at Rome, but Greek learning, when it came, brought philosophy in its train, and the result was a

[1] See p. 169.

considerable influence on the thought, if not on the writings, of the educated classes. We can almost date its beginning in the year 155 B.C. when there arrived at Rome an embassy from Athens consisting of the heads of three of the great philosophical schools, the Stoic, the Peripatetic (based on the teaching of Aristotle), and the Academic (based on the teaching of Plato). Their coming was strongly opposed by the elder Cato, but in the next generation the younger Scipio and his friends, who made a cult of all things Greek, included philosophy among their interests and had as their teacher the Stoic Panaetius: in their circle Cicero loves to place the scene of his philosophic dialogues.

It was about this time that the old Roman religion, which had largely degenerated into formalism, had begun to lose its hold, and while in the popular mind its place was taken by the more exciting forms of worship which reached Rome from the East, the more educated took refuge in Greek philosophy. Yet the direction of their interest is characteristic. Abstract speculation on the ultimate constitution of the universe or on the processes and modes of human thought or the means by which knowledge is attained had little attraction for the Roman: moral philosophy, which might supply a guide and a standard for life, was his primary interest, or else that borderland between philosophy and religion where speculation might supply the place of belief, or an accepted theory of the relation of God to man might satisfy his naturally religious conscience when the old faith had broken down. And so we find that it was to the more practical creeds of Stoicism and Epicureanism, both of which gave prominence to an ethical theory consonant in practice with the Roman moral ideal, that men turned in preference to the more speculative and less concrete systems of Plato and Aristotle. And in the end it was Stoicism which prevailed, largely because it left room for a refined and philosophical religion. It is clear too that philosophical and religious ideas were much influenced by the mystic tendencies of Pythagoreanism, which looked to a future existence of the soul separated from the body and had been introduced to Rome by Cicero's friend and teacher Posidonius.

There are among extant Latin writers only two whose writings on philosophy are worth consideration, Cicero and Seneca, and of these Seneca is so discursive and unmethodical that he can do little more than reflect the prevalent attitude of his age. MARCUS TULLIUS CICERO (whom we have already met as orator, p. 444, and letter-writer, p. 320) was indefatigable: he had studied philo-

sophy in his youth as part of his preparation for oratory, kept up the practice of philosophical thought and discussion during the active years of his political life, and turned again to philosophic writing in his later years, when the Caesarian domination left him little part to play in politics. In these years he doubtless intended in his writings to cover the whole field of philosophical speculation, but it is clear that certain sides of it made a far stronger appeal to him than others. He was not an original thinker and there is not much in his works, beyond the exposition, which can be said to be his own. His method was usually to imagine a discussion taking place, sometimes among the members of the Scipionic circle, sometimes between himself and his contemporaries, in which the views of the various schools are put forward and criticized by opponents, often without any definite conclusion being reached. His own position, in so far as he had one, might be described as that of an 'Academic Eclectic', that is to say that, while he followed in general the tradition of the Platonic school, he was not averse to looking for help to the other sects as well, and in particular in his later works tended to approximate more and more to the views of the Stoics, especially on the moral and religious side. We will take examples, as far as possible, from works on different parts of philosophy which will illustrate both his versatility and his manner. It will be seen at once that with him philosophy was the orator's relaxation, for his dialogues, far from being written in the easy-flowing, half-poetic style of Plato, are in effect pure rhetoric. The parties to the discussion make speeches in which they employ all the oratorical artifices or else cross-examine one another as if they were counsel for the prosecution or defence.

We may take first his works on political philosophy as being the most naturally akin to the interests of his own life. He followed the lead of Plato in writing two treatises, one *On Laws* and the other *On the State* (*De Republica*), of which the latter was the more important and in some ways the most original of his philosophic works, since his theory is coloured not merely by the teaching of the Platonic school, but also by his own political experience: he believes the ideal constitution to be a combination of the elements of monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy, such as existed in Rome in the second century B.C., a period to which in his political speeches as well he constantly turns back. As a typical passage may be quoted one in which—following Plato closely and arguing more from the experience of Athens than from

that of Rome—he explains how democratic licence may result from the overthrow of tyranny.

WHEN I shall have explained my opinion respecting the form of government which I prefer, I shall be able to speak to you more accurately respecting the revolutions of States, though I think there is little danger of them in the mixed form of government which I recommend. With respect, however, to absolute monarchy, it presents an inherent and invincible tendency to revolution. No sooner does a king begin to be unjust, than this entire form of government is demolished, for the best absolute monarchy is close to tyranny, which is the worst of all governments. If this State falls into the hands of the nobles, it becomes an aristocracy, or the second of the three kinds of constitutions I have described. This consists of a council of the chief fathers consulting for the public benefit. Or, if the people have expelled or demolished a tyrant, it may establish a democracy, or government of its wisest and ablest members, and sometimes flourish in its enterprises, and endeavour to defend the policy it has constituted. But if ever the people should raise its forces against a just king, and rob him of his throne, or, as hath frequently happened, should taste the blood of its legitimate nobles, and subject the whole commonwealth to its own licence, you can imagine no flood or conflagration so terrible, or any whose violence is harder to appease than this unbridled insolence of the populace.

Then we see realized that which Plato so vividly describes, if I could but express it in our language. It is by no means easy to do it justice in translation : however I will try.

' When (says Plato) the insatiate jaws of the populace are fired with the thirst of liberalism, and, urged on by evil ministers, they drain the cup, not of tempered liberty, but unmitigated licence ; then their magistrates and chiefs, if they are not quite subservient and remiss, and do not largely promote the popular licentiousness, are pursued, incriminated, accused, and cried down under the title of despots and tyrants.' I dare say you recollect the passage.

Laelius.—Yes, it is very familiar to me.

Scipio.—Plato thus proceeds: 'Then those who feel in duty bound to obey the chiefs of the State are persecuted by the insensate populace, who call them voluntary slaves. But those in the magistracies who flatter the popular equality, and the demagogues who plead the levelling system, and endeavour to abolish all distinctions between nobles and commoners, these they stun with acclamations and overwhelm with honours. It inevitably happens in a commonwealth thus revolutionized that liberalism superabounds in all directions, due authority is found wanting even in private families, and misrule seems to extend even to the animals that witness it. Then the father fears the son, and the son neglects the father. All modesty is banished; they become far too liberal for that. No difference is made between the citizen and the alien; the master dreads and cajoles his scholars, and they despise their masters. The conceited striplings assume the gravity of sages, and sages must stoop to the follies of children, lest they should be hated and oppressed. The very slaves hold themselves as high as their lords; wives boast the same rights as their husbands; dogs, horses, and asses, are emancipated in this outrageous excess of freedom, and run about so violently that they frighten the passengers from the road. At length this infinite licentiousness produces such a morbid self-sufficiency, such fastidious and effeminate sentiments get possession of the people, that when they observe even the slightest exertion of magisterial authority they grow angry and seditious, and thus the laws are necessarily infringed, because there is no ruler that dares to execute them.'

(*De Republica*, I. cc. 43, 44, tr. F. Barham.)

In two of his books Cicero made a gallant attempt to get away from the normal Roman interest in morals and religion, and to introduce into a Latin setting some of the more ultimate questions which were dear to the Greek thinkers. The *Timaeus* is a discussion of the origin of the world from a metaphysical point of view, and the *Academics* an inquiry into the base assumptions

of the various schools and in particular of their views as to the relation of sensation to knowledge. The *Timaeus* is an almost literal—and rather unsuccessful—translation of Plato's dialogue of the same name and may be passed by: of the *Academics*, which is a crabbed and rather technical discussion, we may take a passage in which Lucullus, as against the Academics, is arguing for the trustworthiness of the senses as the foundation of knowledge. We notice here a closer but not really less rhetorical style.

LET us begin then with the senses, whose decisions are so unclouded and so emphatic that were human nature allowed a choice, and were some god to ask of it whether it is satisfied with its senses if unimpaired and undecayed, or whether it calls for some better gift, I do not see what more it is to demand. You really must not at this part of my speech look for me to answer you concerning the bent oar [1] or the pigeon's neck [2]: for I am not the man to maintain that whatever object is presented to our senses possesses just such qualities as it appears to us to possess. Epicurus must see to this matter and to many others of the kind. In my judgment, however, a high degree of truth attaches to our senses in this way, viz. if on the one hand they are sound and strong, and, on the other, all the impediments are taken away which oppose and obstruct their action. Thus not only do we often desire a change in the light and in the positions of those objects which we contemplate, but we also either increase or diminish the distances, and we continue to make many experiments, until our survey itself gives us confidence in our own judgment. The same is the case with sounds, with smell and with taste, so that there is no one amongst us who in dealing with sensations of each separate class calls for any more accurate means of judgment. If again we call in the aid of practice and method, so that the eyes dwell on a painting or the ears on musical notes, who can avoid seeing what great power the senses have? How many points are there which painters see in background and foreground, which we do not see? How many things which

[1] sc. its appearance under water.
[2] sc. the difference of its colouring as seen in different lights.

escape us in a piece of music do the ears of those catch who are practised in that study? Such men tell us at the first note of the flute-player that it is the Antiopa or the Andromacha, though we have not even a glimmering of the fact. It is not at all needful to talk of the senses of taste and smell, which show power of comprehension to a certain extent, though the power is defective. What of touch, and of that touch too which philosophers call the inner touch, either of pleasure or of pain? It is in this alone that the Cyrenaics believe the criterion of truth to reside, because truth is matter of feeling:—well, can any one say that there is no difference between a man who feels pain and one who is in a state of pleasure? Or rather would not any one likely to pronounce such an opinion be most unquestionably mad? But then, whatever be the character of those perceptions which we say are made by the senses, such nature have the inferences from them which are not said to be directly perceived by the senses, but only in a certain degree by the senses: statements like these, for example: 'that object is white, this sweet, that melodious, this fragrant, this rough.' We now hold these judgments as 'apprehended' by the mind, not merely by the senses. Next in order come these statements: 'that object is a horse, that a dog.' Next follow the remaining links in the chain of judgments, which bind up with the others some of higher importance, those, for example, which embrace what we may call a fully completed perception of their subject-matter: 'if an object is a man, it is a creature subject to death, endowed with reason.' This is the class of judgments whereby conceptions of things are impressed upon our minds, and without these no one can either comprehend or inquire or debate.

(*Academica Priora*, II. c. 7, tr. J. S. Reid.)

In the sphere of moral philosophy we have three main works by Cicero: the five books *On the End* (*or Aim*) *of human action* (*De finibus bonorum et malorum*), a discussion, rather on the lines of the *Academics*, of the ethical theories of the various schools; the three books on *Duties* (*De officiis*), which deal with the application

of moral theories in practice; and the five books of *Discussions at Tusculum*, which treat of detached questions such as the fear of death and the endurance of pain. To these must be added the two short and delightful works *On Friendship* and *On Old Age*, which are too well known to be quoted here and should be read in full in one of their many English translations. We may take as typical of Cicero's writing on such ethical subjects a passage from the first-named work, where Cicero represents himself as arguing against the Epicurean Torquatus in refutation of the theory that pleasure is the end of life: pleasure, he says in effect, is the aim of the beasts, and man is made for something higher.

THEREFORE we are bound, Torquatus, to find some other Chief Good for man. Let us leave pleasure to the lower animals, to whose evidence on this question of the Chief Good your school is fond of appealing. But what if even animals are prompted by their several natures to do many actions conclusively proving that they have some other End in view than pleasure? Some of them show kindness even at the cost of trouble, as for instance in giving birth to and rearing their offspring; some delight in running and roaming about; others are gregarious, and create something resembling a social polity; in a certain class of birds we see some traces of affection for human beings, recognition, recollection; and in many we even notice regret for a lost friend. If animals therefore possess some semblance of the human virtues unconnected with pleasure, are men themselves to display no virtue except as a means to pleasure? And shall we say that man, who so far surpasses all other living creatures, has been gifted by nature with no exceptional endowment?

As a matter of fact, if pleasure be all in all, the lower animals are far and away superior to ourselves. The Earth herself without labour of theirs lavishes on them food from her stores in great variety and abundance; whereas we with the most laborious efforts can scarcely if at all supply our needs. Yet I cannot think that the Chief Good can possibly be the same for a brute beast and for a man. What is the use of all our vast machinery of

culture, of the great company of liberal studies, of the goodly fellowship of the virtues, if all these things are sought after solely for the sake of pleasure? Suppose when Xerxes led forth his huge fleets and armies of horse and foot, bridged the Hellespont, cut through Athos, marched over sea and sailed over land—suppose on his reaching Greece with his great armada some one asked him the reason for all this enormous apparatus of warfare, and he were to reply that he had wanted to procure some honey from Hymettus! surely he would be thought to have had no adequate motive for so vast an undertaking. So with our Wise Man, equipped and adorned with all the noblest accomplishments and virtues, not like Xerxes traversing the seas on foot and the mountains on shipboard, but mentally embracing sky and earth and sea in their entirety—to say that this man's aim is pleasure is to say that all his high endeavour is for the sake of a little honey.

No, Torquatus, believe me, we are born for loftier and more splendid purposes. Nor is this evidenced by the mental faculties alone, including as they do a memory for countless facts, in your case indeed a memory of unlimited range; a power of forecasting the future little short of divination; the sense of modesty to curb the appetites; love of justice, the faithful guardian of human society; contempt of pain and death, remaining firm and steadfast when toil is to be endured and danger undergone.

(*De finibus bonorum et malorum*, II. cc. 33, 34, tr. H. Rackham.)

Possibly the group of dialogues most characteristic alike of Cicero himself, of his age, and of the Roman attitude to philosophy is that which contains what we might call the three 'theological' works, *On the nature of the gods*, *On divination*, and *On fate*. In the first, of which there are three books, Cicero discusses in his methodical way the various theological views of the great philosophical schools, in the second he deals in a rather sceptical spirit with the possibility of foretelling the future by means of omens and auguries, while in the short dialogue *On fate* he once again discusses various views which have been held on the question of what we might now call 'determinism' as against 'chance'. Here we will take a striking passage from the first

work, in which Cicero ridicules the idea that a god must have a human form and be a person 'of like passions with ourselves':

AS for your own utterances, they are absolute fictions, scarcely worthy to be discussed by old women over their evening work, for you do not realise how much you would have to become liable for if you obtained our consent to an identity of form between men and the gods. All the ways of attending to and managing the body will have to be observed in the same way by God as by man,—walking, running, reclining, stooping, sitting, holding, and lastly, also, the faculty of speech and discourse. I need not discuss your division of the gods into male and female, for you see what follows from that. For my own part I cannot sufficiently wonder how it was that your founder came to entertain such ideas. But your constant cry is that the blessedness and immortality of God must be retained. Well, what prevents his being blessed, if he were something else than a biped? Or why is not this quality, whether we are to call it *beatitas* or *beatitudo*—both of them, it is true, harsh-sounding terms, but it is for us to make words smooth by using them—why is it not, under whatever name, attributable to the sun above, or to this world of ours, or to some ever-enduring intelligence that is without form and bodily parts? All that you say is, 'I have never seen a sun or world that was blessed.' Well, have you ever seen a world besides this one? You will say no. Why did you venture to say, then, not that there were some hundreds of thousands, but a countless number of worlds? 'Reason taught me.' And will not reason, considering that what is being sought is a nature of supreme excellence, which is at the same time blessed and eternal, for only a nature with those attributes is divine, teach you that, just as we are surpassed by such a nature in immortality, so we are surpassed in excellence of mind, and, as in excellence of mind, so also in excellence of body? Why, then, seeing that we are inferior in other respects, are we equal in the matter of form? It was the virtue of man rather than his figure that came nearest to a likeness to God.

(*De Natura Deorum*, I. cc. 34, 35, tr. F. Brooks.)

We may conclude with a quotation from *Scipio's Dream*, which was intended to form the end of the work *On the State* and is one of the places in which the influence of Pythagoreanism on Cicero's thought is most obvious. In this passage, which deals with the immortality of the heroic soul, is summed up much of the truer feeling of the Republican Roman on death and on the truly Roman life, of which the highest motive should be an exalted patriotism :

WHEN he ceased to speak, I said, 'Oh, Africanus, if indeed the door of heaven is open to those who have deserved well of their country, whatever progress I may have made since my childhood in following yours and my father's steps, I will from henceforth strive to follow them more closely.'

'Follow them, then (said he), and consider your body only, not yourself, as mortal. For it is not your outward form which constitutes your being, but your mind ; not that substance which is palpable to the senses, but your spiritual nature. *Know, then, that you are a god*—for a god it must be that vivifies, and gives sensation, memory, and foresight to the body to which it is attached, and which it governs and regulates, as the Supreme Ruler does the world which is subject to him. As that Eternal Being moves whatever is mortal in this world, so the immortal mind of man moves the frail body with which it is connected ; for what always moves must be eternal, but what derives its motion from a power which is foreign to itself, when that motion ceases, must itself lose its animation.

'That alone, then, which moves itself, can never cease to be moved, because it can never desert itself. It must be the source and origin of motion in all the rest. There can be nothing prior to this origin, for all things must originate from it—itself cannot derive its existence from any other source ; for if it did, it would no longer be primary. And if it had no beginning, it can have no end ; for a beginning that is put an end to will neither be renewed by any other cause, nor will it produce any thing else of itself. All things, therefore, must originate from one source.

Thus it follows, that motion must have its source in what is moved by itself, and which can neither have a beginning nor an end. Otherwise all the heavens and all nature must perish ; for it is impossible that they can of themselves acquire any power of producing motion in themselves.

'As, therefore, it is plain that what is moved by itself must be eternal, who will deny that this is the general condition of minds ? For, as every thing is inanimate which is moved by an impulse exterior to itself, so what is animated is moved by an interior impulse of its own ; for this is the peculiar nature and power of mind. And if that alone has the power of self-motion it can neither have had a beginning, nor can it have an end.

'Do you, therefore, exercise this mind of yours in the best pursuits, which consist in promoting the good of your country. Such employments will speed the flight of your mind to this its proper abode ; and its flight will be still more rapid if it will look abroad and disengage itself from its bodily dwelling, in the contemplation of things which are external to itself.

'This it should do to the utmost of its power. For the minds of those who have given themselves up to the pleasures of the body, paying as it were a servile obedience to their lustful impulses, have violated the laws of God and man ; and therefore, when they are separated from their bodies, flutter continually round the earth on which they lived, and are not allowed to return to this celestial region till they have been purified by the revolution of many ages.'

Thus saying he vanished, and I awoke from my dream.

(*Somnium Scipionis*, cc. 8, 9, tr. F. Barham.)

Of Lucius Annaeus Seneca mention has already been made in the sections on Drama (p. 185), on Letter-writing (p. 336), and on Satire (p. 299). As a philosopher he was primarily a Stoic and was deeply imbued not so much with the intellectual system of the Stoics as with their ideal of character. His interest was almost entirely in the moral side of their philosophy, but he was groping through it to religion, and had so real a sense of the relation of God to man that he has sometimes been spoken of as the nearest of all

pagans to Christianity. But his Stoicism was liberal in its acceptation and he was ready to seek light and to quote aphorisms from any philosophic writer, whatever his creed. He wrote philosophical dialogues—amiable amateur discussions on points of morals with no very close reasoning, but exhibiting a sound commonsense outlook on life and some real insight into the essentials of conduct. We may quote first from the dialogue *On the Happy Life*, which was addressed to his brother Gallio, the Roman official before whom St. Paul was brought at Corinth. The passage shows rather closer argument than usual and is a good exposition of the main Stoic position in morals: 'virtue' must be the moral ideal and can have no truck with 'pleasure', the moral ideal of the Epicureans.

'BUT what,' asks our adversary, 'is there to hinder virtue and pleasure being combined together, and a highest good being thus formed, so that honour and pleasure may be the same thing?' Because nothing except what is honourable can form a part of honour, and the highest good would lose its purity if it were to see within itself anything unlike its own better part. Even the joy which arises from virtue, although it be a good thing, yet is not a part of absolute good, any more than cheerfulness or peace of mind, which are indeed good things, but which merely follow the highest good, and do not contribute to its perfection, although they are generated by the noblest causes. Whoever on the other hand forms an alliance, and that, too, a one-sided one, between virtue and pleasure, clogs whatever strength the one may possess by the weakness of the other, and sends liberty under the yoke, for liberty can only remain unconquered as long as she knows nothing more valuable than herself: for he begins to need the help of Fortune, which is the most utter slavery: his life becomes anxious, full of suspicion, timorous, fearful of accidents, waiting in agony for critical moments of time. You do not afford virtue a solid immoveable base if you bid it stand on what is unsteady: and what can be so unsteady as dependence on mere chance, and the vicissitudes of the body and of those things which act on the body? How can

such a man obey God and receive everything which comes to pass in a cheerful spirit, never complaining of fate, and putting a good construction upon everything that befalls him, if he be agitated by the petty pin-pricks of pleasures and pains ? A man cannot be a good protector of his country, a good avenger of her wrongs, or a good defender of his friends, if he be inclined to pleasures. Let the highest good, then, rise to that height from whence no force can dislodge it, whither neither pain can ascend, nor hope, nor fear, nor anything else that can impair the authority of the ' highest good '. Thither virtue alone can make her way : by her aid that hill must be climbed : she will bravely stand her ground and endure whatever may befall her not only resignedly, but even willingly : she will know that all hard times come in obedience to natural laws, and like a good soldier she will bear wounds, count scars, and when transfixed and dying will yet adore the general for whom she falls : she will bear in mind the old maxim ' Follow God '. On the other hand, he who grumbles and complains and bemoans himself is nevertheless forcibly obliged to obey orders, and is dragged away, however much against his will, to carry them out : yet what madness is it to be dragged rather than to follow ? as great, by Hercules, as it is folly and ignorance of one's true position to grieve because one has not got something or because something has caused us rough treatment, or to be surprised or indignant at those ills which befall good men as well as bad ones, I mean diseases, deaths, illnesses, and the other cross accidents of human life. Let us bear with magnanimity whatever the system of the universe makes it needful for us to bear : we are all bound by this oath : ' To bear the ills of mortal life, and to submit with a good grace to what we cannot avoid.' We have been born into a monarchy : our liberty is to obey God. (*De beata vita*, c. xv, tr. A. Stewart.)

A second passage may be taken from the dialogue *On Mercy*. It is less of a sermon than the first quotation, and represents Stoicism in a severer mood: the wise man may show mercy, which is prompted by reason, but he must not feel pity, which is a mere weakness.

JUST as the gods are worshipped by religion, but are dishonoured by superstition, so all good men will show mercy and mildness, but will avoid pity, which is a vice incident to weak minds which cannot endure the sight of another's sufferings. It is, therefore, most commonly found in the worst people; there are old women and girls who are affected by the tears of the greatest criminals, and who, if they could, would let them out of prison. Pity considers a man's misfortunes and does not consider to what they are due: mercy is combined with reason. I know that the doctrine of the Stoics is unpopular among the ignorant as being excessively severe and not at all likely to give kings and princes good advice; it is blamed because it declares that the wise man knows not how to feel pity or to grant pardon. These doctrines, if taken separately, are indeed odious, for they appear to give men no hope of repairing their mistakes, but exact a penalty for every slip. If this were true, how can it be true wisdom to bid us put off human feeling, and to exclude us from mutual help, that surest haven of refuge against the attacks of Fortune? But no school of philosophy is more gentle and benignant, none is more full of love towards man or more anxious to promote the happiness of all, seeing that its maxims are to be of service and assistance to others, and to consult the interests of each and all, not of itself alone. Pity is a disorder of the mind caused by the sight of other men's miseries, or it is a sadness caused by the evils with which it believes others to be undeservedly afflicted: but the wise man cannot be affected by any disorder: his mind is calm, and nothing can possibly happen to ruffle it. Moreover, nothing becomes a man more than magnanimity: but magnanimity cannot coexist with sorrow. Sorrow overwhelms men's minds, casts them down, contracts them: now this cannot happen to the wise man even in his greatest misfortunes, but he will beat back the rage of Fortune and triumph over it: he will always retain the same calm, undisturbed expression of countenance, which he never could do were he accessible to sorrow.

(*De clementia*, ii. 5, tr. A. Stewart.)

It has been seen already (p. 336) how through the long series of letters to Lucilius there runs a strain of philosophy. Sometimes it seems to come more clearly to the surface, but it is always of a garrulous, easy-going type and puts no strain on Lucilius's comprehension. A fair specimen may be taken from a letter on old age: it ought probably to be described as moralizing rather than philosophy, and perhaps that might really be said with justice of Seneca's work as a whole.

I OWE it to my country-place that my old age became apparent whithersoever I turned. Let us cherish and love old age; for it is full of pleasure if one knows how to use it. Fruits are most welcome when almost over; youth is most charming at its close; the last drink delights the toper,—the glass which souses him and puts the finishing touch on his drunkenness. Each pleasure reserves to the end the greatest delights which it contains. Life is most delightful when it is on the downward slope, but has not yet reached the abrupt decline. And I myself believe that the period which stands, so to speak, on the edge of the roof, possesses pleasures of its own. Or else the very fact of our not wanting pleasures has taken the place of the pleasures themselves. How comforting it is to have tired out one's appetites, and to have done with them! 'But,' you say, 'it is a nuisance to be looking death in the face!' Death, however, should be looked in the face by young and old alike. We are not summoned according to our rating on the censor's list. Moreover, no one is so old that it would be improper for him to hope for another day of existence. And one day, mind you, is a stage on life's journey.

Our span of life is divided into parts; it consists of large circles enclosing smaller. One circle embraces and bounds the rest; it reaches from birth to the last day of existence. The next circle limits the period of our young manhood. The third confines all of childhood in its circumference. Again, there is, in a class by itself, the year; it contains within itself all the divisions of time by the multiplication of which we get the total of life. The month is bounded by a narrower ring. The smallest circle of all is the

day ; but even a day has its beginning and its ending, its sunrise and its sunset. Hence Heraclitus, whose obscure style gave him his surname,[1] remarked : ' One day is equal to every day.' Different persons have interpreted the saying in different ways. Some hold that days are equal in number of hours, and this is true ; for if by ' day ' we mean twenty-four hours' time all days must be equal, inasmuch as the night acquires what the day loses. But others maintain that one day is equal to all days through resemblance, because the very longest space of time possesses no element which cannot be found in a single day,—namely, light and darkness,—and even to eternity day makes these alternations more numerous, not different when it is shorter and different again when it is longer. Hence, every day ought to be regulated as if it closed the series, as if it rounded out and completed our existence.

Pacuvius, who by long occupancy made Syria his own, used to hold a regular burial sacrifice in his own honour, with wine and the usual funeral feasting, and then would have himself carried from the dining-room to his chamber, while eunuchs applauded and sang in Greek to a musical accompaniment : ' He has lived his life, he has lived his life ! ' Thus Pacuvius had himself carried out to burial every day. Let, us, however, do from a good motive what he used to do from a debased motive ; let us go to our sleep with joy and gladness ; let us say :

> I have lived ; the course which Fortune set for me
> Is finished.

And if God is pleased to add another day, we should welcome it with glad hearts. That man is happiest, and is secure in his own possession of himself, who can await the morrow without apprehension. When a man has said : ' I have lived ! ' every morning he arises he receives a bonus.

(*Ep. Mor.*, xii. 4–9, tr. R. M. Gummere.)

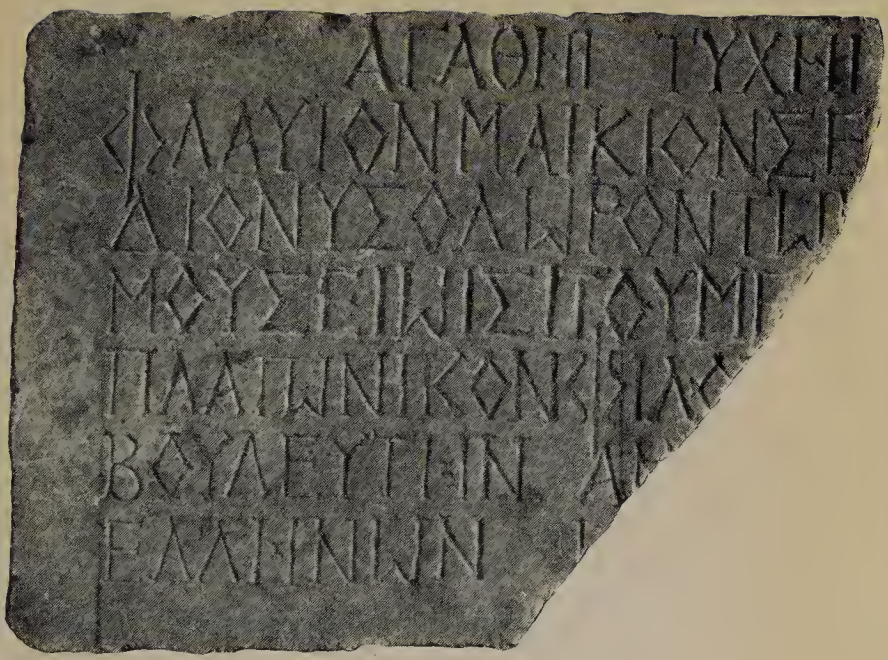
[1] He was known in antiquity as ' The dark one ' (ὁ Σκοτεινός).

Later on in the Roman Empire there were still philosophers, but they wrote in Greek. There were the two great Stoic writers, Marcus Aurelius the Emperor, and Epictetus the slave: they well represent the Graeco-Roman attitude of their time in its highest aspects. There was Plutarch, too, the omniscient Boeotian, who made a more careful study of philosophy than most men of his day, so that his attacks on Epicureanism are still a valuable source of information for its tenets. Of those who wrote in Latin the only writer we need mention is the African APULEIUS of Madaura, whom we have already met as a novelist[1]. He was a theologian more than a philosopher, and in his works come out prominently two strong characteristics of his age: a tendency towards monotheism in the idea that there is but one supreme God, who appears in many forms, and at the same time a strange belief in the existence of 'demons', lower powers who act as intermediaries between man and the gods. The latter tenet may be illustrated by a passage from his work *On the God (or demon) of Socrates*, in which, having stated that the gods themselves have no direct contact with man, he goes on to describe the nature of the demons:

PLATO shall answer for his opinion in my words. 'I do not affirm,' says he, 'that the Gods are so far separated and alienated from us that not even our prayers can reach them; for I have not removed them from attention to the affairs of mankind, but only from contact with them.'

Besides, there are certain divine powers of a middle nature, situate in this interval of the air, between the highest ether and the earth below, through whom our aspirations and our deserts are conveyed to the Gods. These the Greeks call by the name 'daemons', and, being placed as messengers between the inhabitants of earth and those of heaven, they carry from the one to the other prayers and bounties, supplications and assistance, being a kind of interpreters and message-carriers for both. Through these same demons, as Plato says in his Symposium, all revelations, the various miracles of magicians, and all kinds of presages, are carried on. For specially appointed individuals of this number administer everything according to the province

[1] See pp. 267 ff., 512 f.



A Greek inscription of the third century A. D. set up in Antinoe in Upper Egypt, in honour of a Platonic philosopher who had the privilege of free sustenance in the Museum at Alexandria

By permission of the Egypt Exploration Society

Scenes from a Professor's classroom at Alexandria

From a sarcophagus in Berlin

assigned to each ; either by framing dreams, or causing ominous fissures in entrails, or governing the flights of some birds, or instructing others in song, or inspiring prophets, or by launching thunders, or causing the lightning to flash in the clouds, or other things to take place by means of which we obtain a knowledge of future events.

It is not becoming that the Gods of heaven should condescend to things of this nature. This is the province of the intermediate Gods, who dwell in the regions of the air which are adjacent to the earth, and on the confines of the heavens, just as in each part of the world there are animals peculiarly adapted to it, those which fly living in the air, and those which walk on the earth. For since there are four elements universally known, nature being as it were divided into four grand portions, and there are animals peculiar to earth, water, and flame (for Aristotle informs us that certain animals peculiar thereto, and furnished with wings, fly about in burning furnaces, and pass the whole period of their existence in fire, come to life therein, and with it die), and besides this, since, as we have already observed, so many stars are beheld floating above in aether, that is to say, in the very brightest heat of fire,—*since this is the case*, why should nature suffer this fourth element, the air, which is so widely extended, to be the only one void of every thing, and destitute of its own inhabitants ? Why should not animated beings be generated in this air in the same manner as animals that exist in flame are generated in fire, animals that float, in water, and those of an earthly nature, on earth ?

(*De Deo Socr.*, vi–viii, tr. Anon., Bohn's Library.)

It is not very edifying reasoning and forms a rather lame conclusion to a chapter in the history of Latin literature which cannot in any case be very highly estimated.

If we are looking for the expression of a truly Roman interest in philosophy, we shall perhaps find it in its most characteristic form not in the prose of those writers who set out to expound it, but embodied here and there in the poets and almost imperceptibly leavening their thoughts. Lucretius (see sections on

Didactic Poetry, pp. 95 ff., and on Science, p. 488) wrote the one complete exposition of a physical philosophy, and his interest in cosmology was carried on with an odd blend of astrology by Manilius (see pp. 126 ff.): the philosophic element again is strong in Virgil and especially in the great description of the fate of the soul in the lower world (see p. 42). Contaminated with rhetoric it shows itself again in the historical epic of Lucan (pp. 55 ff.): in lighter vein it appears in the moralizing of the satirists, and above all of Horace (pp. 288 ff.) who loves to play with philosophical ideas and to make them the groundwork of his banter. But if philosophy is to be defined as serious and consecutive thought on great subjects, then, with the sole exceptions of Lucretius and some parts of Cicero's work, it is wanting in Latin. The Roman was not a philosopher, and for all his interest in morality and religion nothing could make him such.

SCIENCE

THE scientific idea, that is the conception that order reigns in Nature and can be traced by human endeavour, is essentially a product of the Greek genius. It profoundly influenced Greek modes of thought. Since Greek philosophy was the ancestor of Roman philosophy, this idea certainly had its effect on the Roman way of thinking. Nevertheless, the clear conception of the pursuit of order in Nature by diligent personal investigation seldom appears in ancient writings in the Latin language.

In Latin literature there is, therefore, but little to be found of the aspiration for research as we know it to-day, and as it was known in Greek antiquity. It is true that among the Latin philosophers, especially those of the Stoic and Epicurean schools —e. g. Seneca and Lucretius—we find great emphasis laid on the structure of the Universe and its influence on human fate. But philosophy is not science and in those days, as in these, the philosopher usually took his science as he found it. He did not investigate Nature for himself. The conception of the Universe limited by the outermost sphere of fixed stars, and all within arranged in a simple mathematical order, was not of a kind to inspire further curiosity. Moreover, the widely held astrological dogma that the body of man, and even his destiny, was closely linked with the mathematical rule which governed the movements of the heavenly bodies, and was indeed a manifestation of that rule, turned men's thoughts from considering their own construction. The one thing worth knowing in Nature was the controlling order of the Heavens, and that the Roman astrologer knew well.

Thus there is nothing in Latin to compare with the biological works of Aristotle, the medical works of the Hippocratic collection, the mathematical and physical, astronomical and geographical writings of such giants as Aristarchus, Archimedes, and Eratosthenes, or the anatomical and physiological investigations of the brilliant Herophilus and of the industrious and ingenious Galen. The type of labour involved in the preparation of such works made scant appeal to the Roman mind. Yet it is certainly very strange that among an Imperial people, naturally interested in

the mechanism of government, we find no geographical treatises to compare with the great work of Ptolemy or even the less scientific compilation of Strabo.

In one sense, however, the scarcity of scientific writings in the Latin language is a little deceptive. It must be remembered that even down to late Imperial times every well-educated man wrote and spoke Greek. By a convention of the age, Greek was the language employed for scientific purposes, as French is used now for diplomacy. Strabo, in the first century B. C., was an ardent admirer of Rome and of Roman methods of government. He was constantly in Rome. But his great treatise on geography was written in Greek. Galen, who died in the year A. D. 200, spent all his active life in Rome, and must have habitually used Latin in converse with his patients, among whom was the Emperor Marcus Aurelius himself. Yet his vast works, which provided all anatomical and physical knowledge until the sixteenth century, were composed in Greek, as were the philosophical writings of his royal master. Ptolemy, an older contemporary of Galen who worked in Egypt, then a Roman province, made the final astronomical and geographical synthesis of antiquity. He must have relied on the observations of Roman travellers, soldiers, and officials, yet he, too, employed Greek as his medium. On the other hand, among the few Latin writings to which the name *scientific* can be applied are some which like that of Celsus are but translations from the Greek. There are others, like that of Pliny the Elder, which lean so heavily on Greek authors that they may be called compilations from the Greek. And lastly, there are a very few works, such as that to which the name of Coelius Aurelianus is attached, in which a writer steeped in Greek, but with an imperfect acquaintance with the Latin tongue, has employed Latin as his medium.

But our estimate of the actual value of Latin scientific literature must not blind us to the role that it has played in history. The heirs of Rome in the West were the Middle Ages. Latin was the sole language of learning throughout that great stretch of time. To understand the Middle Ages we must examine the legacy that passed from the Empire to the barbarian peoples who overran it and gradually absorbed its culture. An important part of that legacy and a part much neglected by historians was Latin science. An examination of it will reveal to us some of the material from which modern thought slowly and painfully evolved during the later Middle Ages. Latin science is medieval science, and it was

in a matrix of medieval science that modern science first germinated.

It will be convenient to deal with various departments of science separately.

§ 1. *The Constitution of Matter. The Four Elements.*

In antiquity two views prevailed as to the general nature of matter. One of these views was popularized by Aristotle. According to this theory all matter was made up of four essences, primary substances, principles, or—to give them their technical Latin title—*elements*. These four were *Earth*, *Air*, *Fire*, and *Water*. It was held that these formed inimical couples, Fire and Water quenching each other, Earth and Air being of opposing nature.

This theory of elements is partly dealt with by SENECA (3 B.C.–A.D. 65 [1]), a writer of the Stoic school who acted as tutor to Nero. The writings of Seneca were well known to medieval readers, by whom he was often mistaken for a Christian.

WATER, as Thales says, is the most powerful element; he regards it as having been the first to exist and the source of all things. We Stoics hold the same or at any rate a somewhat similar opinion; for we say that it is fire which lays hold upon the universe and turns all things to its own nature. This fire, we believe, sinks and dies away, so that, when fire is extinguished, nothing is left in nature save moisture, the hope of the universe that is to be.[2] Fire therefore is the end and moisture the beginning of the universe. Do you marvel then that rivers can proceed without ceasing from this element which was before all things and from which all are sprung? This moisture in the primal division of things was reduced to a fourth part of the whole, and was so placed that it might suffice for the production of rivers, streams and springs. . . . The whole terrestrial globe, according to Thales, is upborne by water, on which it floats like a boat. (*Quaest. Nat.* iii. 13–14.)

[1] See pp. 181 ff., 299 ff., 336 ff., 476 ff.

[2] The ancients were naturally familiar with the way in which dry seeds can be made to sprout by being moistened, a process that came to be freely compared to the resurrection of the dead.

§ 2. *The Constitution of Matter. The Atomic Theory.*

The doctrine of the four elements was emphasized by the Stoic school. The atomic theory was, on the other hand, a fundamental dogma of the opposing Epicurean philosophy. The atomic view of matter was propounded by the Greek philosophers Leucippus (flourished about 450 B. C.), Democritus (flourished about 410 B. C.), and Epicurus (340–270 B. C.). It is presented in the poem of LUCRETIUS (about 95–55 B. C.[1]).

The old atomic view, as expressed by him, resembles the modern theory in certain respects, but in others differs widely from it. Atoms, according to Lucretius, are indestructible and uncreatable, they are infinite in number and they vary in size and form, but the number of these forms is limited. They are constantly moving, colliding, receding, combining. They are not fundamentally grouped into ' elements ' in either the ancient or the modern sense. Beside atoms there is only the ' void '. Atoms and the void make up the whole of existence. The atomic philosophy was developed by Lucretius along lines which would nowadays doubtless be called ' materialistic '. Everything of the nature of soul was ignored and immortality denied to man.

IF you think that the first beginnings of things [i. e. atoms] can stay still, and by staying still beget new movements in things, you stray very far from true reasoning. For since they wander through the void it must needs be that all the first-beginnings of things [atoms] move on either by their own weight or sometimes by the blow of another. For when quickly, again and again, they have met and clashed together, it comes to pass that they leap asunder at once this way and that; for indeed it is not strange, since they are most hard with solid heavy bodies, and nothing bars them from behind. And the more you perceive all the bodies of matter tossing about, bring it to mind that there is no lowest point in the whole universe, nor have the first bodies [atoms] any place where they may come to rest, since I have shown in many words, and it has been proved by true reasoning, that space spreads out without bound or limit, immeasurable towards every quarter everywhere. And since that is certain,

[1] See pp. 95 ff., 510.

no rest, we may be sure, is allowed to the first-bodies [atoms] moving through the deep void, but rather plied with unceasing, diverse motion, some when they have dashed together leap back at great space apart, others too are thrust but a short way from the blow. And all those which are driven together in more close-packed union and leap back but a little space apart, entangled by their own close-locking shapes, these make the strong roots of rock and the brute bulk of iron and all other things of their kind. Then again, a few bodies which wander through the great void leap far apart, and recoil afar with great spaces between ; these supply for us thin air and the bright light of the sun. Many, moreover, wander on through the great void, which have been cast back from the unions of things, nor have they anywhere else availed to be taken into them and link their movements. (*De Rerum Nat.* ii. 80–111.)

After this follows the illustration from the behaviour of motes in a sunbeam already quoted in the Section on Didactic Poetry (p. 98).

§ 3. *General Conception of the Universe.*

Just as there was more than one view of the structure of matter held by the ancients, so also there was more than one view of the structure of the Universe. It happens, however, that so far as Latin writings are concerned one view, and one view alone, held the field. This view had been set forth by Aristotle and considerably elaborated by later philosophers.

The whole system of the Universe was regarded as spherical, the sphere being considered the most perfect figure. The heavenly bodies were eternal and changeless and moved in their orbits with uniform circular motion. These orbits were arranged concentrically with our Earth in the middle of all. It was only on and near this imperfect and changeful Earth that creation and destruction took place, and there alone the imperfect forms of motion, such as linear motion, were to be found. Outside the great spherical universe itself was not even empty space, nothing save only that great power that moved the Universe, the *primum mobile*, by some identified with the Divine Intelligence or with God Himself. The outermost of the spheres was that in which

the fixed stars were to be found, and among these were specially noted the zone of the ecliptic, containing the signs of the Zodiac, and the zone crossing it, the Milky Way. The great sphere was thought of as mapped out into figures, the names of many of which have come down to us attached to constellations. The fixed stars themselves were often thought of as intelligences. Thus it was that they were held to influence the events in the inner earthly sphere, and specially to control the destinies of man.

Within the sphere of the fixed stars was a series of seven spheres, each containing one of the wandering stars or planets. The ancients were not quite agreed upon the order. A common view was that from without inward they were arranged as follows: Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Sun, Venus, Mercury, Moon. Below the Moon was the atmosphere that surrounds the Earth. It was in this sublunary sphere alone that change was possible.

Thus at the centre of the world stood the spherical Earth. On its surface lay the Ocean, the centre of the globe being occupied by solid earth. In this lowermost mundane sphere was the natural dwelling-place of those combinations of the four elements with which we are familiar. Of these elements *Earth*, by nature densest and most gross, occupied of right the lowest or most central place. Next floated the less dense element *Water*. Above the *Water* moved the *Air*. As for *Fire*, the rarest and most volatile of all, that had ascended higher still, though there was a difference of opinion as to the level at which it had finally settled. Some found its ultimate destiny in the stars.

The spheres were separated from one another by intervals which corresponded to the intervals of musical notes. A note was characteristic of each sphere, and for those who were fortunate enough to hear its divine strains the whole system gave forth a celestial harmony, *the music of the spheres*. The system was capable of much mystical and poetical interpretation. We may consider its treatment by two Latin writers:

(*a*) The elder PLINY (A. D. 23–79) was a learned and curious Roman country gentleman and public servant. He was extraordinarily industrious, and spent much of his life, which was cut short by the eruption of Vesuvius that overwhelmed Pompeii, in the preparation of a vast compilation of natural curiosities. Nothing in this *Natural History* was new, and little was tested at first hand. It may be compared to a scrap-book formed by a man entirely without critical powers, but filled with a boundless curiosity. Though of much lower calibre than the exquisite

passage from Cicero that follows (p. 493), the work of Pliny is yet perhaps more typical of Roman thinking.

THE Universe and whatsoever it be that we call the heavens, within whose sphere all things are enclosed, may be conceived of as Deity, eternal, infinite, uncreated, imperishable. To inquire into what lies beyond concerns not man and is past the reach of human understanding. It is holy, everlasting, measureless and all in all; nay, it is the sum of all things, infinite, yet in semblance finite, in all things certain, yet uncertain in its semblance, within and without embracing all, the work of Nature and at the same time Nature's very self. . . .

That its form is a perfect sphere is shown by its name and by the general agreement of mankind in speaking of it as such. But the same truth is impressed upon us by the consideration of actual things, not merely because a sphere in all its parts tends towards its centre, is self-supporting, self-including, self-containing, needing no framework and through all its parts sensible neither of end nor of beginning, nor yet because such a figure is peculiarly adapted for motion such as I shall shortly show that it possesses, but also because by the witness of our eyes we see that it is in every part convex and central, characteristics which can be found in no other figure.

The rising and setting of the sun suffer us not to doubt that this sphere revolves eternal and unresting with speed unspeakable within the period of four and twenty hours. Whether the sound produced by the continual rotation of so huge a mass is measureless, and therefore beyond mortal hearing, I would not venture to affirm, any more than I would dare affirm whether the stars as they roll together along their paths in heaven produce a harmony of melodious sweetness passing all belief. For us who dwell within it the Universe revolves both night and day in unbroken silence. That its surface is not smooth and polished like an egg, as some distinguished authors have asserted, but is stamped with the shapes of countless animals and all manner of things, is clear from demonstrable facts. For thence fall the seeds of all things

from which, more especially in the sea, spring forms innumerable, which, when these seeds are mingled together, are oft-times monstrous in character. Further the evidence of our eyes tells us that in one portion of the skies there is the shape of a wain, in one of a bear, in another a bull, in another a letter, while through the zenith runs the white path of the milky way. . . .

Nor can I find that any doubt that the elements are four in number. The highest is fire, from whence proceed the shining eyes of the multitudinous stars. The next is the spirit, to which the Greeks and ourselves give the same name *aer*. From this springs life; it penetrates all things and is infused throughout the whole. By its power earth is poised in mid-space together with the fourth element of water. Thus by the mutual embracing of diverse elements all things are united; things light are prevented by things heavy from flying away, while on the other hand that which is weighty is kept from falling by the upward tendency of that which is light. Thus by this straining to move in opposite directions all things are kept in equipoise within the restless whirl of the Universe; and, since this always returns upon itself, the earth holds the central and lowest point, suspended firmly fixed upon the central axis and balancing that whereon it hangs, the one thing without motion in all the rolling Universe, at once bound to every other part and lending them support. Between the earth and heaven, poised in the same element of spirit, hang at fixed intervals the seven stars, known from their continual motion as the planets or wandering stars, though no stars wander less than they. In the midst of them moves the sun, huge in bulk and mighty in its strength, the controller not only of times and climates, but of the heaven and stars as well. (*Nat. Hist.* ii.)

(*b*) A more inspiring view than that of Pliny is given by CICERO (106–43 B. C.) in his treatise *De re publica*[1]. This is a work of absorbing interest and it is one of the great losses to literature that it survives in only a fragmentary condition. Fortunately, the part with which we are concerned, the *Dream of Scipio*, is preserved in its entirety. This most remarkable passage recalls

[1] See p. 467

the *Vision of Er* in Plato's *Republic* (Bk. X to end), and Cicero himself tells us that he drew on Plato and Aristotle. Cicero was thus confessedly borrowing from his Greek predecessors. He was composing philosophical works in a language which had not yet been used for the purpose and for a people who had not as yet taken to such studies. The work was moreover written at very great speed and while in a condition of mental anguish. Despite the difficulties of composition the *Dream of Scipio* is among the gems of Latin thought and expression.

Scipio Africanus the Younger (185–129 B. C.) is here shown the whole Universe in a vision. The heavenly bodies are regarded as the dwelling-place of the righteous. The speaker is Scipio's father.

'UNLESS that God, of whom all that thou beholdest is the temple, hath released thee from the prison of the body, the way hither is barred to thee. For man is born on this condition that he should possess that globe which thou seest in the midst of this vast temple, even the globe which is called the earth; and the soul that is given him is from those everlasting fires which you call planets and stars, which, englobed and ensphered, complete their orbits with marvellous swiftness and are instinct with divine intelligence. Wherefore thou and all good men must keep the soul under the body's ward, nor without his bidding that gave it may you depart from mortal life, lest you should seem to have abandoned the task assigned by God to man. But do thou, Scipio, like thy grandsire and like myself that begat thee, honour justice and duty, duty which, great though it be when rendered to parents and kindred, is greatest when shown forth in the service of thy country. Live thus and thou shalt find the path to heaven and to the assembly of those who have lived their life and, released from the body, dwell in this place that thou seest'—now the place was a circle of dazzling light shining amid flames which, as you have learned from the Greeks, is called the Milky Way. And as I gazed therefrom on all around me, all things else that I saw seemed to me most wondrous and full of glory. Now these stars were such as we have never seen from this earth where we stand, and their greatness was such as we have never dreamed of,

and the smallest of them was that which shone with borrowed light, furthest from heaven and nearest to the earth. And the globes of these stars far surpassed the greatness of our world. In truth earth itself seemed so little to my eyes that I deemed this empire of ours, wherewith we but touch a mere point on its whole surface, to be but a sorry thing. Seeing that I fixed my gaze on earth ever more and more, 'How long', said he, 'shall thy spirit be thus bent earthwards? Dost thou not see to what regions of heaven thou art come? Know that all of them are bound together by nine wheels, or rather spheres, of which the outermost is the sphere of heaven which encloses all the remainder, being the very God, the Most High, that encloses and contains the rest. On this heavenly sphere are fixed the eternal courses of the revolving stars. Beneath it are seven spheres that turn with motion counter to that of heaven, whereof one is ruled by that star which on earth is named of Saturn. Next is that light which brings health and blessing to mankind, the star named Jupiter; then comes the red star, earth's bane, that is called of Mars. Next beneath it the Sun holds the region that is nigh the midst, the Sun, leader and prince and governor of the other lights, mind and controller of the Universe, being of such magnitude that it fills and illumes all things with its light. The Sun is followed by the courses of Venus and of Mercury, that are, as it were, his companions, while in the lowest wheel of all spins the Moon, lit with the Sun's beams. Now below the Moon there is naught that is not subject unto death, save only the souls given by the gods to the race of man, whereas above the Moon all things endure to everlasting. For the Earth which comes ninth in the centre of all moves not at all, but is the lowest, and toward it all things that have weight sink of their own downward impulse.'

As I gazed on all these wonders I marvelled, bemused; and when at last I came to my senses, 'What,' I cried, 'what is this sound, so mighty and so sweet, that fills my ears?' 'This', he said, 'is the music which, divided by intervals, unequal but disposed by the eternal reason in due proportion, is made by the speed and motion of these same wheels and, blending high

and low, creates diverse smooth-flowing harmonies. For such mighty movement cannot hurtle on its way in silence. Nature ordains that the innermost should utter forth a deep and the uttermost a shrill tone. Wherefore the star-bearing course of heaven, that is highest of all and moves most swiftly, sweeps on its way with shrill and vehement sound, while the deepest note is given forth by the lunar sphere that is the lowest. For the ninth, that is the Earth, remains motionless, clinging everlastingly to one spot in the very heart of the universe. Now these eight courses, of which two have the same note, create seven different sounds parted by intervals the one from the other. And this number is, as it were, the knot that binds all things, and it was by imitation of these seven intervals with lyre and voice that wise men opened up for themselves a return to this place, even as did those who with surpassing wit ensued after divine studies in this mortal life. Filled wholly with this sound the ears of men have grown deaf, for you have no duller sense than that of hearing. Even so, where the Nile, at those falls which are named the Cataracts, plunges down from exceeding great mountains, the people that dwells in those places has lost the sense of hearing owing to the greatness of the noise. Now this sound that is caused by the surpassing speed of the revolution of the universe is so mighty that the ears of man may not take it in, even as you cannot gaze full upon the Sun, but your eyes and senses are vanquished by his beams.' Now, though I marvelled at all these things, none the less I continued ever and again to turn mine eyes earthwards.

Then said he, 'I perceive that even now thou gazest at the abode of mankind: if it seem to thee as small as in truth it is, then fix thine eyes always on these heavenly things, despising those yonder that are of man. For what fame on the lips of men or what glory worth the seeking canst thou win? Thou seest that on earth mankind dwells in places of but little room, few and far between, and that betwixt even those specks wherein they dwell there lie vast solitudes; and the inhabitants of earth are not only so far sundered that they can have no word, one of

the other, but are placed, some at an acute, others at a right angle to yourselves, while yet others are your antipodes, from whom you can assuredly hope for no renown.

'Now thou seest that yonder earth is, as it were, ringed and girt about with certain zones, of which two are as far as may be, one from the other, and at either extremity rest upon the very poles of heaven, both of them congealed with frost, whereas the midmost and greatest zone is scorched with the burning heat of the sun. Two zones there be that are habitable, and of these the southern, whereon men have their feet upturned to yours, concerns not your race at all, while of that which lies beneath the north, your dwelling-place, see how small a part touches your confines. For all the earth which you inhabit is narrowed betwixt north and south, but wider from east to west, being, as it were, a little isle girt about by that sea which you name Atlantic, Great, or Ocean, though thou seest how small it is despite its lofty names. And from these civilized and familiar regions has thy name or that of any man ever had strength to climb over the heights of Caucasus, which thou seest yonder, or to swim the Ganges? Who among the remainder of mankind, dwelling in furthest east or west, shall ever hear of thy name? And if they all are thus sundered from thee, thou seest how narrow is the room in which the glory of man may be spread abroad. And as for those very men that do speak of you, how long shall they continue so to speak?'

(*Somn. Scip.*, 15–20.)

§ 4. *Astronomy.*

In addition to such conceptions of the Universe as that set forth by Cicero and Pliny, the Latins were acquainted to some extent with observational astronomy. Elementary astronomical knowledge was of great antiquity among them. Such knowledge is indeed necessary for an agricultural people unprovided with a reliable calendar, with which the Romans were not equipped until the end of the pre-Christian period. In the Alexandrian school in Egypt, however, astronomy had been for centuries a favourite subject of study. Egypt was absorbed into the

Empire in the year 30 B. C. Long before then, as Pliny tells us, some of the results of Greek astronomical science had become known to the Romans. With the inclusion of Alexandria in the Empire, however, such material became even more accessible. The greatest of the astronomers of the Empire, Ptolemy, worked at Alexandria.

Astronomical knowledge, as sketched by PLINY, gives an idea of what might be expected of an educated but not technically instructed Roman of his time.

IT is obvious that the sun is eclipsed by the intervention of the moon, and the moon by the opposition of the earth, and also that these effects are reciprocal, the moon robbing the earth and the earth robbing the moon of the sunlight. As the moon creeps on, a veil of sudden darkness is drawn across the earth, while the sun is dimmed by her shadow, and night is nothing save the shadow of the earth. Now this shadow is in shape like a cone or inverted top, since it strikes the moon only with its point and does not exceed her altitude. For no other heavenly body is obscured in like manner, and a figure of this kind always terminates in a point. The fact that shadows are annihilated by distance is proved by the flight of birds when they soar to a great height. Therefore the limit to which shadows extend is the boundary line between air and ether. Above the moon every thing is clear and full of the light of day. . . .

Such reasoning uplifts our mortal minds to heaven, and, as we look down therefrom, reveals to us the size of the three greatest constituent parts of Nature. For the sun could not be completely hidden from earth by the intervention of the moon if the earth were greater than the moon. And the vastness of the third constituent, namely the sun, is made manifest by consideration of the other two, so that it is not necessary to judge its magnitude by the evidence of the eyes or by abstract speculation. For the immensity of its bulk is obvious from the following facts. The shadows of trees planted in rows of unlimited length fall at equal intervals, as though the sun were in the middle of space. Again at the equinox it is immediately over the heads of all who dwell in southern lands, while the shadows of those who inhabit

the regions of the tropics fall to the north at noon and to the west at sunrise. Now this would be impossible if the sun were not far greater than the earth ; a fact which is further shown by the circumstance that at sunrise it far exceeds Mount Ida in breadth, overlapping it widely on either side, despite its remoteness. The eclipse of the moon also gives clear proof of the sun's magnitude, just as the sun's eclipse demonstrates the smallness of the earth. For shadows assume one of three figures : it is known that if the body casting the shadow be equal to the source of light the shadow will be shaped like a pillar and have no termination ; on the other hand, if the body be greater than the source of light, its shadow will be in the shape of an inverted cone, whose apex will point downwards and whose length will be infinite ; whereas, if the body be less than the source of light, the shape of the shadow will be that of a cone standing on its base, point uppermost. Now, since the shadow seen at eclipses of the moon is of the last of these three types, obviously there can be no further doubt that the sun is larger than the earth.

(*Nat. Hist.*, ii, §§ 47 ff.)

§ 5. *Geography.*

The most disappointing department in the whole range of Roman science is Geography. The only classical work devoted to the subject is that of Pomponius Mela (about A. D. 43). It is a very inadequate account, obviously by a man of no great scientific attainments. Some geographical material may be gleaned from historical writers such as Tacitus and Livy or from philosophical authors such as Cicero and Seneca, or from works on general science such as those of Lucretius and Pliny. The real representatives of geography under the Empire are, however, works in Greek such as the scientific treatises of Eratosthenes (fragments only), Strabo, and Ptolemy.

The Earth, as described by the geographers of the Empire, was a sphere.[1] The surface of the Earth was divided, according

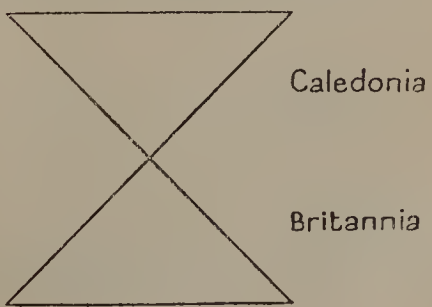
[1] Tacitus alone among educated Romans, as far as we know, clung to the opinion that the Earth was flat. In the Middle Ages no scientific writer regarded the world as other than a sphere ; though some cranks and fanatics, without knowledge of Tacitus, held his opinion.

to Roman reckoning, into a series of *climates* or spaces between parallels of latitude. Twenty-four such *climates* intervene between the equator and the pole, each corresponding to an increase of half an hour in the length of the longest day. More familiarly, it was divided into a series of *zones*, a torrid zone impassable by reason of heat round the equator, two temperate zones, in the northern of which we dwell, and a frigid zone around each of the two poles. The southern hemisphere was of academic interest only, for it was believed to be inaccessible. Yet, in the *Antipodes*, it was somehow felt that there dwelt the *Antichthones* with their feet pointing to ours.

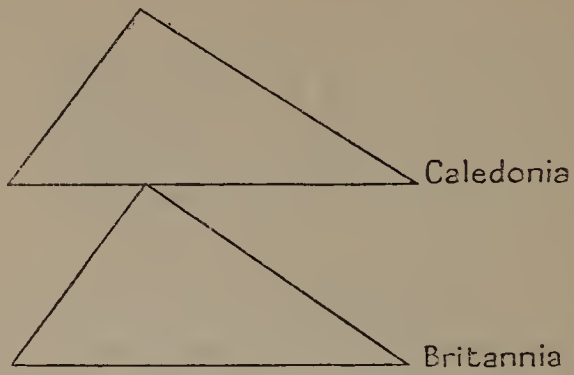
The part of the Earth on which we dwelt was regarded as a great island, which extended in the south but little farther than Meroe, to the north little farther than Britain and Thule, to the east no farther than the Ganges, and to the west no farther than Spain. This great island was cut into by four great Gulfs, two from the south—the Persian and Arabian seas; one from the north, the Caspian sea; and a great one from the west, the Mediterranean sea, *Our Sea* as it was familiarly called, of which the Euxine or Black sea was but an offset.

Save for the descriptions of Italy and the countries immediately adjoining thereto, the geographical accounts in Latin are quite surprisingly hazy. This is the more remarkable when we recall the wonderful system of communications of the Empire and the fact that good itineraries giving measured distances between places far apart come down to us. The description of Britain by Pomponius Mela can be read in the companion volume to this work, *The Legacy of Rome* (p. 308). A more fascinating description is that given by Tacitus in his *Agricola*.

The shape of Great Britain is compared by TACITUS to a *double axe*. The natural interpretation of this would be



Tacitus criticizes this view and he seems to imply that the proper comparison is to two triangles in the same rather than in inverted positions thus :



BRITAIN is the largest of all the islands recognized in Roman geography. As to its size and position, it faces Germany on the east, Spain on the west, and on the south is within sight of Gaul. Its northern shores, which have no land opposite, are washed by a vast and open sea. The best historical authorities . . . have compared the shape of the whole island to an oblong dish or a battle-axe. This comparison applies in fact only to Britain, excluding Caledonia. The description of a part has been applied to the whole island. But if you cross the border you find running out from the point where the coasts converge an immense, shapeless tract of country narrowing into a sort of wedge. This was the first occasion on which the Roman fleet coasted round the shores of this distant sea, and established the fact that Britain was an island. On the same voyage they discovered and subdued the islands called the Orkneys, hitherto unknown. They also sighted Thule, but did not land, since they had no orders to proceed farther, and winter was at hand. However, they say that the sea there is sluggish and very heavy to row in, and is never even made rough by winds like other seas. This must be because land and mountains, which cause storms, are rarer there, and the deep mass of unbroken sea is not easily stirred. It is not the business of this work to inquire into the

nature of the ocean and its tides, and many have written on the subject. But I may add one point: nowhere is the dominion of the sea more wide: a multitude of currents set in all directions, and the ebb and flow of the tide is not confined to the shore, but the sea works its way far inland and penetrates among highlands and mountains, as though it were in its own domain. The climate is vile; constant rain and clouds. But extreme cold is unknown. The day lasts longer there than it does in our latitude. In the far north of Britain the night is light and short, and only a brief interval divides the end and the beginning of daylight. If clouds do not obscure the sun, its rays can be seen by night. It does not set or rise, so they declare, but merely passes across the horizon. The fact is that the land at this extremity of the earth is flat, and casts a low shadow: thus the darkness does not reach very high, and night falls below the level of the sky and stars.

Although the olive and the vine and the other peculiar products of warmer countries do not grow there, the soil is fertile and bears crops. They sprout up quickly, but are slow to ripen. The cause is in both cases the same—the abundant moisture of the ground and climate. Britain contains gold and silver and other metals, which reward our conquest. The sea also produces pearls, but they are of a dull leaden hue. Some attribute this to the divers' lack of skill: for in the Red Sea the oysters are torn alive and breathing from the rocks, while in Britain they are gathered as the sea casts them up. Personally I could sooner believe the pearls deficient in quality than mankind in greed.

(*Agricola*, c. 10, tr. W. H. Fyfe.)

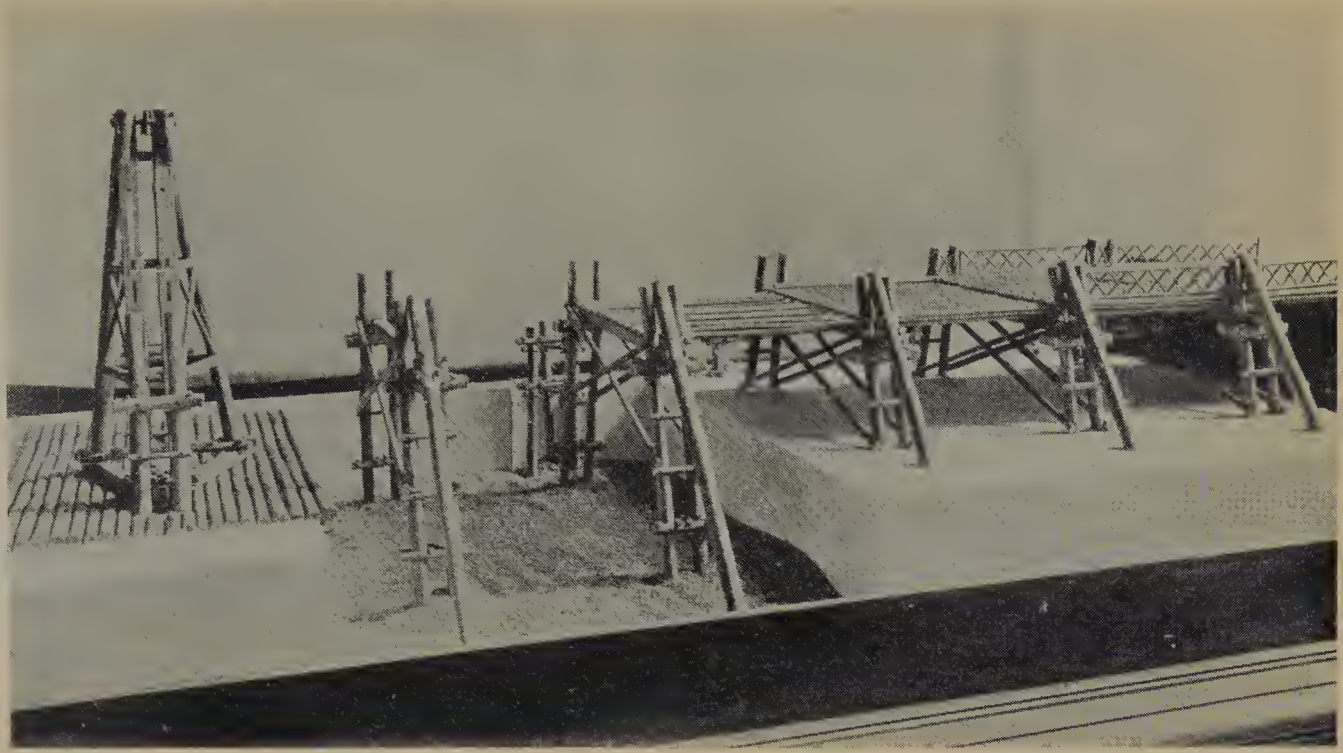
§ 6. *Military Engineering.*

Much might be said of the Latin descriptions of mechanical devices, such as the hodometer, the water-clock, and the sundial, or of sanitary engineering, in which some of the greatest constructive achievements of the Romans were carried out. The passages in which these are described have, however, but little literary merit, and are therefore not included in this collection. For descriptions of such works the reader may be referred to

the chapter on Science in the *Legacy of Rome*. We make, however, one quotation to illustrate the specially Roman subject of military engineering.

Of all departments of scientific activity, military engineering was that in which the Romans showed themselves most expert. There is a considerable Latin literature on the subject, nor were the Romans, as in so many other matters, wholly dependent here upon their predecessors. A good many of what have been humorously called 'military *improvements*' are of genuine Roman origin. These are especially connected with modes of attack and involve not only instruments but also engineering operations. Among the latter an especially lively description is that given by the greatest Roman adept in the Art of War of the manner in which his army crossed the Rhine.

CAESAR was now resolved to cross the Rhine. He was nevertheless strongly of the opinion that to do this by means of boats would neither be unattended by risk, nor worthy of his own or his country's dignity. The task on the other hand, of bridging a river of the width, depth, and rapidity of the Rhine, was no light one ; and yet it must either be successfully grappled with, or else the army not be transported at all. The type of bridge he finally adopted was as follows. First of all, wooden posts, a foot and a half in diameter, sharpened a little from the end, and measured to the depth of the stream, were coupled in pairs at a distance of two feet. These were then placed in position by mechanical contrivance, and driven down into the bed of the river by rams, being set not like ordinary piles, directly perpendicular with the water, but tilted over at an angle in the direction of the current. This done, a similar set of posts, parallel to the first, but sloping against the force and rush of the tide, was carried across the stream forty feet farther down. Across each corresponding pair stout planks were next stretched, which, being of a width of two feet, exactly fitted the space between the separate posts, the whole framework being kept in position by a pair of under-braces running from either side. As these last crossed diagonally, and had free play at the point of section, the strain of the natural forces at work upon the structure



Reconstruction of Caesar's bridge over the Rhine in the Musée de Saint-Germain-en-Laye

Photograph—Neurdein et Calmann-Lévy réunis

proved so nicely adjusted that the greater the impact of water against the posts the tighter they were clinched and held together. These large planks were then connected by lighter boards running transversely down the bridge, which in turn were overlaid with poles and fascines to form the floor. To protect the bridge when finished, two breastworks were appended. On the side down stream, a row of piles was driven out at an angle from either shore, forming at the centre a sort of buttress, which being linked to the main fabric of the bridge was able to break the force of the current; while on the upper side the same formation was adopted at a little space above the bridge, whereby, in case the natives should launch trunks of trees or boats down the river for the purpose of wrecking the work, a stout buffer was interposed sufficient to break their shock and to prevent any real damage to the bridge.

Within ten days of the time at which the first timber reached their hands, the engineers had finished the work, and the army passed to the farther shore.

(*De Bell. Gall.*, iv. 17, tr. F. P. Long.)

§ 7. *Medicine.*

There is every reason to believe that the Romans made no contribution to Medicine in the restricted sense. Much was done in organizing the work of teaching, and the city of Rome gave great opportunities to able Greek practitioners, of whom Galen was chief. In the development of the subject itself, however, Romans played little part. It is thus the more strange that what is perhaps our best and clearest short account of medical practice in antiquity comes to us in Latin, bearing the name of CELSUS. Of its author very little is known. He was evidently a cultured man who must have lived in Rome in the first half-century after the birth of Christ. He writes good Latin, is a close and accurate observer and has a humane and generous outlook. Nevertheless, there can be little doubt that the work is in the main a translation of a Greek compilation. Many of its Greek sources have been traced. The book itself formed part of an encyclopaedia of knowledge of which other fragments have survived.

Not the least remarkable portion of Celsus is the introduction

in which he claims dissection of the human body as a useful and humane process, but repudiates experimentation on living beings.

AS pains and various other disorders attack the internal parts, the members of the *Methodist* school believe no person can apply proper remedies to those parts of which he is ignorant; and, therefore, that it is necessary to dissect dead bodies, and examine their *viscera* and intestines, and that Herophilus and Erasistratus had taken far the best method for attaining that knowledge, who procured criminals out of prison, by royal permission, and, dissecting them alive,[1] contemplated, while they were even breathing, the parts which nature had before concealed; considering their position, colour, figure, size, order, hardness, softness, and smoothness; also the processes and depressions of each, or what is inserted into another part, or received another part into itself; for, they say, when there happens any inward pain, a person cannot discover the seat of that pain if he have not learned where every *viscus* or intestine is situated; nor can the part which suffers be cured by one who does not know what part it is; and that when the *viscera* happen to be exposed by a wound, if one is ignorant of the natural colour of each part, he cannot know what is sound and what corrupted; and for that reason is not qualified even to render first aid to the corrupted parts; besides they maintain that external remedies are applied with much more judgement when we are acquainted with the situation, figure, and size of the internal parts; and that the same reasoning holds in all the other instances above mentioned. And that it is by no means cruel by the tortures of a few guilty to search after remedies for the whole innocent race of mankind in all ages. . . .

But these things, however, which have been mentioned are only idle; but what remains is also cruel, to cut open the abdomen and *praecordia* of living men, and make that art which presides over

[1] This charge was repeated by early Christian writers. There can be no doubt, however, that it is baseless. Herophilus and Erasistratus lived *c.* 290 B. C.

the health of mankind the instrument not only of inflicting death, but of doing it in the most horrid manner; especially if it be considered that some of those things, which are sought after with so much barbarity, cannot be known at all, and others may be known without any cruelty; for that the colour, smoothness, softness, hardness and such like, are not the same in a wounded body as they were in a sound; and further because these qualities, even in bodies that have suffered no external violence, are often changed by fear, grief, hunger, indigestion, fatigue and a thousand other inconsiderable disorders; which makes it much more probable that the internal parts, which are far the more tender and never exposed to the light itself, are changed by the severest wounds and mangling. And that nothing can be more ridiculous than to imagine anything to be the same in a dying man, nay, one already dead, as it is in a living person; for that the abdomen indeed may be opened while a man breathes; but as soon as the knife has reached the *praecordia*, and the midriff is cut, which by a kind of membrane divides the upper from the lower parts (and by the Greeks is called the *diaphragm*), the man immediately expires; and thus the *praecordia* and all the *viscera* never come into view of the butchering physician till the man is dead; and they must necessarily appear as those of a dead person, and not as they were while he lived; and thus the physician gains only the opportunity of murdering a man cruelly, and not of observing what are the appearances of the *viscera* in a living person; if, however, there be anything which can be observed in a person that yet breathes, chance often throws it in the way of such as practise the healing art; for that sometimes a gladiator on the stage, a soldier in the field, or a traveller beset by robbers, is so wounded that some internal part, different in different people, may be disposed to view; and thus a prudent physician finds their situation, position, order, figure, and the other particulars he wants to know, not perpetrating murder, but attempting to give health; and learns that by compassion which others had discovered by horrid cruelty. But for these reasons it is not

necessary to lacerate even dead bodies ; which, though not cruel, yet may be shocking to the sight, since most things are different in dead bodies ; and even the dressing of wounds shows all that can be discovered in the living.

(*Praef.*, 23–6, 40–4, tr. Grieve, revised.)

§ 8. *Nature Study.*

In the study and observation of Nature, Roman Art, as has been shown in the *Legacy of Rome* (pp. 265–7), shows a peculiar interest which is reflected in Roman literature. In Nature Study as in other scientific departments, we must not seek among the Romans for any great general ideas, nor for leading scientific principles. Of shrewd, though not always original, observation of the ways and characters of animals and the habits of plants there is ample store. Perhaps the best known of these observations are to be found in the works of Virgil. These, however, have the glamour of poetry upon them. Simpler, earlier, perhaps a more characteristic product of the average Roman outlook is the work of the learned old country gentleman VARRO.[1] Doubtless many of his ideas are taken from Aristotle and other Greek writers, but Varro has a manner, a style, and an approach of his own. We choose for quotation part of his account of bees, which always attracted the attention of ancient naturalists : readers of Virgil's Fourth *Georgic* (see pp. 120 ff.) will see that he drew on Varro for much of his material.

BEES are produced in some cases by bees, in others by the putrefying carcase of an ox. Wherefore Archelaus describes them in one of his epigrams as ' wandering children of a heifer dead ' and again tells us that ' wasps are of horses bred and bees of calves '. Bees are not solitary by nature as eagles are, but gregarious like men. You may urge that jackdaws also are gregarious. But they are not gregarious to the same extent as bees, for the latter combine to work and build, which jackdaws do not. Bees possess both art and method ; from them we learn to work, to build and to store our food. For it is with these three things that they are concerned, food, houses, and work, nor is the wax identical with their food, their honey or their house. Each

[1] See pp. 285 ff., 357.

cell has six angles, one for each of the bee's feet. And the geometers tell us that a regular hexagon described within a circle occupies a larger portion of the circle than any other figure. They feed out of doors and work within, the fruit of their labours being that which both gods and men love for its exceeding sweetness; for the honey-comb gets as far as the altar, and honey is served at the beginning of dinner and again for the second course. Their communities are like those of men, for they have a king and government and social organization. They have a passion for all things that are clean. And, therefore, none of them will ever settle on a spot that is defiled or smells foully, nor even on a man scented with fragrant ointment. Indeed if a man thus anointed goes near them, they sting him, whereas flies lick him. Consequently bees are never seen to settle on flesh or blood or fat, as flies are wont to do. Therefore, they settle only on such things as have a sweet taste. The bee is the most harmless of things, for it spoils no man's work by pulling it to pieces; and yet it has the courage to withstand any that seek to disturb it, although at the same time it is conscious of its own weakness. Therefore, they are with reason styled the 'birds of the Muses', since, if scattered, they can be recalled to one spot by the rhythmical clashing of cymbals or clapping of hands; and just as men have assigned Helicon and Olympus as dwelling-places to the Muses, so to bees nature has assigned wild mountains, rich in flowers. They follow their king [1] wheresoever he goes, and hold him up if he be weary, while, if he cannot fly, they bear him on their necks in their desire to save him. They are never idle themselves and hate those that are. Wherefore they harry the drones and drive them from the nest, since they give no help to the community and eat the honey; and you may see a number of drones crying aloud for mercy and pursued by a few bees. Outside the door of the hive they block up all chinks, whereby wind might get at the comb, with a substance which the Greeks style *erithace*. They all live like soldiers in an army, sleeping and working by equal relays, and send out colonies whose leaders cause certain

[1] See p. 121, n. 1.

things to be accomplished at the sound of their voice, which is like a trumpet-call. This they do when they make signals of war or peace one to another. . . . (*Res Rusticae*, iii. 16.)

We may quote one other passage from the same work to show the kind of observation of nature which was prevalent in Varro's day. It deals from the agricultural point of view first with snails and then with dormice.[1]

SAID Axius, Your part, my friend Merula, has been made lighter by Appius. The second act, which concerned hunting, has been quickly gone through, and as for what remains—snails and dormice—I am not anxious to hear about them, as the subject can present no great difficulty. More than you think, Axius my dear fellow, said Appius, for you have to find a suitable place for your snail-beds, and it must be open to the sky and entirely surrounded by water, lest when you put snails in it to breed you find not only the children gone, but the mothers as well. You must, I repeat, keep them confined by means of water, or else you will have to get a ' slave-catcher '.

The best spot is one visited by dew and not baked by the sun. If there is none such provided by nature—which is usually the case in a sunny place—and you do not chance to have a shady spot in which to make your snail-bed, at the foot of mountain rocks, for instance, the base of which is bathed by a lake or streams, you will have to make a dewy place artificially. This is done by getting a hose-pipe with small teats attached to it which squirt water on to some stone near by, so that the water is splashed in all directions.

Snails need little food and no one to give it to them ; they discover it, as they crawl about, on the floor of the enclosure, and even find it, unless they are stopped by a stream, by climbing the upright walls. And indeed while they are on the huckster's stall they manage to keep alive for a long time by chewing the cud, with the help of a few bay leaves thrown amongst them and

[1] The larger species known in French as *loir*.

a sprinkling of bran. And so the cook as a rule does not know whether they are alive or dead when he is cooking them.

There are several varieties of snails: the small white ones brought from near Reate, the big ones from Illyrium, and those of middle size which come from Africa. Not but what they differ in these places both in distribution and size; for instance, very big snails come from Africa, *Solitannae*, which are so big that three gallons can be put into their shells. And similarly in other countries snails though of the same kind differ in size from one another. When breeding they lay an incalculable number of young which are very small and have a soft shell that hardens as time goes on. When large islands are made in the enclosures the snails bring you a big haul of pence. They are, I may add, fattened usually in the following way. A jar for them to feed in having holes in it is lined with a mixture of *sapa*[1] and spelt. It must have these holes that air may get in. The snail is certainly very tenacious of life.

The account of the dormice is briefer, but not less interesting:

THE place where dormice are kept is of a different kind, as it is an enclosure bounded not by water, but by a wall the whole of which is faced on the inside with smooth stone or plaster, to prevent the dormouse from crawling out. In it should be small acorn-bearing trees. When these are not bearing, acorns and chestnuts should be thrown inside the wall for the dormice to eat their fill. Fairly wide holes are to be made for them in which they can bring forth their young. There should not be much water, as they take but little of it, and like a dry place. They are fattened in jars, which many people keep inside the villa. These jars made by the potter differ greatly in their construction from other, as grooves are made in their sides, and a hollow in which to place food. Into this jar are put acorns, walnuts, or chestnuts. A lid is put on the jars, and in the darkness the dormice grow fat.

(*Res Rusticae*, iii. 14, 15, tr. L. Storr-Best.)

[1] New wine boiled thick.

§ 9. *Attitude towards Nature.*

The attitude of the Roman toward the world in which he lived is reflected chiefly in his philosophy. Yet much of this material so closely borders on science that we must give it some attention.

The Roman thinker, as we have seen, leaned as a rule towards either the Stoic or the Epicurean school. The Stoics laid very great emphasis on the relation of man's fate to that of the circling heavens which enclosed him and his world. Their conception of the world, thus linked with astrology, tended to be peculiarly mechanical: all in life seemed determinate. Nor was the universe of the Epicurean any less determinate. But the determinism of the atomistic Epicureans differed from that of the Stoics in being less mathematical and mechanical. However much Lucretius might believe in atoms, he would yet be bound to admit that his actual *knowledge* of these atoms was negligible. He might make a scheme that explained the workings of the world by means of his atomistic theory, but he could not predict immediate future happenings. *Savoir afin de prévoir* has been said to be the aim of science. It is a knowledge that the Stoic could claim—however falsely. But the Epicurean could give no *detailed* prevision in the astrological manner. And so, in practice, Epicurean thought gave a little more rein to speculation than Stoic. It is thus less wonder that we find in LUCRETIUS certain anticipations of modern scientific ideas such as are not encountered in Stoic writings. Among the most remarkable of these is a famous passage in which Lucretius seems to speak in terms of organic evolution.

FIRST of all the earth gave birth to the tribes of herbage and bright verdure all around the hills and over all the plains, the flowering fields gleamed in their green hue, and thereafter the diverse trees were started with loose rein on their great race of growing through the air. Even as down and hair and bristles are first formed on the limbs of four-footed beasts and the body of fowls strong of wing, so then the new-born earth raised up herbage and shrubs first, and thereafter produced the races of mortal things, many races born in many ways by diverse means. For neither can living animals have fallen from the sky nor the beasts of earth have issued forth from the salt pools.

It remains that rightly has the earth won the name of mother, since out of earth all things are produced. And even now many animals spring forth from the earth, formed by the rains and the warm heat of the sun; wherefore we may wonder the less if then more animals and greater were born, reaching their full growth when earth and air were fresh. First of all the tribe of winged fowls and the diverse birds left their eggs, hatched out in the spring season, as now in the summer the grasshoppers of their own will leave their smooth shells, seeking life and livelihood. Then it was that the earth first gave birth to the race of mortal things. For much heat and moisture abounded then in the fields; thereby, wherever a suitable spot or place was afforded, there grew up wombs, clinging to the earth, by their roots; and when in the fullness of time the age of the little ones, fleeing moisture and eager for air, had opened them, nature would turn to that place the pores in the earth and constrain them to give forth from their opened veins a sap, most like to milk; even as now every woman, when she has brought forth, is filled with sweet milk, because all the current of her nourishment is turned towards her paps. The earth furnished food for the young, the warmth raiment, the grass a couch rich in much soft down. But the youth of the world called not into being hard frosts nor exceeding heat nor winds of mighty violence; for all things grow and come to their strength in like degrees.

(*De rerum nat.*, v. 783–820.)

Stoic and Epicurean, however they might differ on other counts, were at one in their belief that all things were in fact determinate. They were thus both freed from the wild fears which haunted the ancient world, fears that were played upon by the bizarre oriental religious sects which flourished in the hotbed of decaying Roman society. The philosophers of both Stoic and Epicurean schools held their heads high above the base belief in Magic, which followed these religions as the shadow does the substance. But among the less educated the belief in bewitchments and magical workings became an obsession in the degenerate social system of the later Empire. The magical beliefs of antiquity and the repudiation

of them by the educated classes are well reflected in the writings of Apuleius.

Apuleius of Madaura in North Africa (*fl. c.* A.D. 150, see pp. 267 ff., 482 f.) is remembered to-day chiefly as the author of that delightful novel *The Golden Ass*. He, however, considered himself to be a philosopher and man of science. He was accused of having bewitched a rich widow to marry him, and his defence has survived. In the passage quoted he is explaining that if he did collect strange fish it was in the interests of science and not of the Black Art. The passage is interesting as showing that he actually dissected the specimens brought him, and further that the creature was probably the very beast which he denies it to be, the Sea Hare, a mollusc (*Aplysia irritans*) which actually contains a number of small bony structures set round the alimentary canal and serving to grind up its food. Apuleius's description is sufficiently accurate. The bones are set very close together and adhere to the wall of the canal.

'BUT', says my adversary, 'for what purpose save evil did you dissect the fish brought you by your servant Themison?' As if I had not told you just now that I write treatises on the organs of all kinds of animals, describing the place, number and purpose of their various parts, diligently investigating Aristotle's works on anatomy and adding to them where necessary. I am, therefore, greatly surprised that you are only aware of my having inspected one small fish, although I have actually inspected a very large number under all circumstances wherever I might find them, and have, moreover, made no secret of my researches, but conducted them openly before all the world, so that the merest stranger may, if it please him, stand by and observe me. In this I follow the instruction of my masters, who assert that a free man of free spirit should as far as possible wear his thoughts upon his face. Indeed I actually showed this small fish, which you call a sea-hare, to many who stood by. I do not yet know what name to call it without closer research, since in spite of its rarity and most remarkable characteristics I do not find it described by any of the ancient philosophers. This fish is, as far as my knowledge

extends, unique in one respect, for it contains twelve bones resembling the knuckle-bones of a sucking-pig, linked together like a chain in its belly. Apart from this it is boneless. Had Aristotle known this, Aristotle who records as a most remarkable phenomenon the fact that the fish known as the small sea-ass alone of all fishes has its diminutive heart placed in its stomach, he would assuredly have mentioned the fact.

(*Apologia*, c. 40.)

§ 10. *Man's Place in Nature.*

There is one aspect of scientific thought which most closely trenches on the domains of religion and of philosophy. It is man's estimate of his place in Nature. It passes imperceptibly into his attitude to his fellow man and to his God. The Roman outlook was here profoundly modified by the advent of Christianity. Nevertheless, long before Christian influence made itself felt, many of the social elements, thought by some to be characteristic of that religion, had come to the fore. The benevolent activities of the guilds, the building of hospitals, legal restraint of abortion and of the exposure of children, pleadings for the merciful treatment of slaves, impassioned outbursts against gladiatorial shows, claims that all men had like rights—all these were to be seen in Rome of the first century of the Christian era. Nor can that society have been wholly abandoned which heard the teaching of the missionary sage, the perfect Stoic, Epictetus, who dubs himself a follower of the Cynic school.

> 'A slave and cripple, Epictetus trod
> This earth in penury—the friend of God.'

The brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God is preached in notes, clear, if somewhat thin, by Seneca—'They are slaves did I hear some one say?' he asks. 'No, not slaves, comrades, unpretentious friends or—if you will—our fellow slaves, for we are all slaves to Fate' (*Ep. mor.* xlvii), yet 'superior to Fate can no man rise save by God's aid' (xli. § 2). Seneca's is the phrase 'See you a man unmoved in danger, untouched by desire, happy in adversity, calm in the storm, looking on men from above, ranging himself as with the gods, will you not say "upon that man a divine power has descended"?' (xli. § 4). He is echoed in Sir Henry Wotton's *Lord of Himself*.

But these are high standards, nor without better sanctions than he possessed could the Roman sustain them. A surer reflex of Roman feeling as to man's place in nature is given by less perfect Stoics such as PLINY. It is in his cynical, pitiless, and hopeless vision of Man's place in Nature that we get the real index of Roman feeling.

PRIDE of place will rightly be given to man, for whose sake Nature seems to have generated all other things, though she exacts so huge, so cruel a price for her bounty, that it is hard to tell whether she is to be regarded as the best of parents or the most unkind of step-mothers.

In the first place she clothes man, alone of all her offspring, with the spoils of other creatures. To the rest she has given diverse coverings, each after their kind, shells, crusts, spines, hides, fur, bristles, hair, down, feathers, scales and fleeces ; even the trunks of trees she has protected from cold and heat by enveloping them in bark, which is sometimes double. Man alone at his birth she casts naked on the naked earth to wail and cry ; man only of all her many creatures does she expose to tears ; and they begin to flow at the very commencement of his life. But as for laughter, in good truth, it is granted to none before his fortieth day at the very earliest and then only to the most precocious of children. Such is our introduction to the light, and forthwith we suffer a lot from which even the wild beasts born in this world of ours are exempt ; for chains are cast about us and every limb is wrapped in swaddling-bands. Man, born under such a happy star, man the lord of creation, lies bound hand and foot, weeping and wailing, and begins his life a captive for no other crime than the mere fact of being born. Alas for the madness of those that deem that, despite such a woeful entrance into the world, they are born to flaunt their pride. The first presage of strength, the first gift of time makes him like to a four-footed beast. How soon can he walk ? or talk ? How soon is his mouth firm enough to eat ? How long his head continues to pulse at the crown, thereby proclaiming him the feeblest of all living things!

Then come diseases in all their thousands, and remedies devised to heal each one of them, and even the remedies ever and anon are baffled by new forms of sickness. But other creatures realize their powers ; swiftness in some, in others rapid flight or swimming, while man learns only what he is taught, and cannot speak, walk or feed, or in a word do aught of his own nature save weep. And so there have been many who have thought it happiest never to have been born or, once born, once more to be with all speed as though they had never been. Of all creatures one alone knows grief, one alone knows luxury, aye, luxury in all its forms, appealing to every member of his body. One only is acquainted with ambition, avarice and the insatiable desire to live, one only is vexed with superstition, with care for the burial of his body and even with what shall be when he is gone. None has a frailer hold of life, none such wild appetite for all things, none is subject to such a welter of fear, none to such mad outbursts of rage. In a word, other animals live honestly with their own kind. We see like gather to like and stand fast against those of a different breed. The lion's fierceness fights not its own kin, the serpent's tooth spares serpents, not even the monsters of the deep and fish vent their rage save against other kinds. But, in good truth, most of man's evils are sprung from man.

(*Nat. Hist.*, vii. 1.)

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